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INTRODUCTION

A CENTURY is a mere arbitrary division of time, differing only from a day, a week, or a year in being longer. It would seem absurd to expect history to group its events neatly and dramatically into the hundred-year lengths into which we have chosen to chop it. Great events, stirring movements, the lives of eminent men, cannot be effectively fitted into a neat time framework. Big men and big movements alike will often begin in one of our centuries, continuing into and ending in another.

Yet as we look back upon the history of our own country, at any rate, it is astonishing to realize how each of the past centuries has come to have a very distinct and separate character of its own. Enumerate them, and they conjure up each its definite ideas and pictures.

Is it the fourteenth? We think of wonderful cathedrals being raised over the land, and of Chaucer reading his poems to the Court or leading the Pilgrims to Canterbury. The fifteenth?—the long fight with France, and the succeeding horrors of civil war. The sixteenth?—Shakespeare and the sea. The seventeenth?—Milton and the struggle for Parliamentary freedom. The eighteenth?—the age of wigs and of reason, with a stormy sunset in the revolutionary wars. The nineteenth?—

Until recently the nineteenth century has been too close to be estimated as a whole. Now, at the end of the first quarter of its successor, it may be viewed in clearer perspective. It is not a mere gap of twenty-five years or so that separates us from its problems and ideals, its friendships and its enmities. We look back at it across the sundering chasm of the Great War.

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Europeans in the early part of the nineteenth century must have thought of the time before the French Revolution as a dreamlike, far-off period when people lived whose problems and passions, whose fashions not only of dress, but of thought, were almost grotesquely unlike their own. The War is to us what the Revolution was to them—a great divide, across which we look at an age that already begins to have a character of remoteness.

As in a landscape a far-off hill, lightly veiled in mist, has a charm that the good highway under our feet does not possess, so is it with the past. Distance heightens interest. The desire to explore, to discover, to understand, is awakened, and the joy of exploration is quickened when the ground is not only new and varied, but strewn with all kinds of half-suspected treasure. Hence, probably, the enthusiasm with which scholars are delving in the comparatively fresh fields of nineteenth-century history, with the result that long and short histories, biographies, monographs, and sketches are coming in a flood—all concerned with the events or personages of that crowded epoch.

It is a century that well repays the student. No previous hundred years can show such a bewildering kaleidoscope of changing circumstances and ideas. Within that short period the whole structure of English life has changed.

At its opening England was an almost entirely rural country, its inhabitants leading very much the same kind of life as their ancestors had lived for the previous three hundred years or more. Land was still the criterion of prosperity, and the landed gentry were the rulers of the country, both socially and politically. The south and south-east of England were, as they had been in Tudor and Stuart days, the wealthiest and weightiest parts of the country—though already villages were developing into ramshackle towns in Lancashire and the Midlands.

Canals had been constructed, and some of the new indus-

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tries used them for transport, but the horse and horse-drawn vehicles were the standard means of locomotion, and ten miles an hour a dizzying speed.

Friends visited each other, farmers went to market, or sent their produce there, merchants travelled from town to town, judges went on circuit, all in exactly the same way as their forefathers had done from time immemorial. The roads might be better, the carriages or carts more comfortably sprung, the breed of the horses improved, but the pace was the same, and the pace was the pace of the Middle Ages.

By the forties all this was altered. Railways were spreading their network all over the country, and these by the end of the century had developed practically to their present-day strength, while experiments had also been made in using electricity instead of steam-power.

While land transport was thus revolutionized communication by sea was similarly speeded up. Even the beautiful, swift tea-clippers of the *Cutty Sark* type lost in the race with steam, and when steel triumphed over wood and the Navy substituted 'ironclads' for the old 'hearts of oak' the old order finally gave place to the new on sea as well as on land.

The shortening of voyages decreased England's distance from other lands, and when electric cables had been laid, and had brought with them easy and rapid overseas communication, her insularity became less marked. Steamships and the electric cable helped her to cease being an island and to become an empire.

Within her own bounds the balance of power shifted gradually from south to north, and this shifting brought in its train another important change—money instead of land became the basis of power. The landowner retired before the millowner, and the aristocratic junta that had for so long ruled unchallenged had to listen to the voice of the strong and rich middle class created by industrial conditions. Lancashire,

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Yorkshire, and the Midlands became full of new and important towns—towns that owed their prosperity and their very being to the increasingly important steel, cotton, and coal or woollen industries. Within fifty years the country became predominantly industrial instead of agricultural.

This change implied an enormous increase in the total wealth of the country, especially as England had at that time few trade rivals; for Europe was exhausted by the Napoleonic wars and the crippling Continental System, and America was still too young a civilization to be a serious competitor. This condition of affairs combined with the undoubted genius of English industrial inventors and the enterprise of English merchants to lift her out of the slough of the lean years that followed the war, and to make possible the fat and rather smug prosperity of mid-Victorian days.

The history of such a development could not but be interesting, and it is the more so because of the widespread reactions on every aspect of the lives of the people. It was inevitable that such changes could not be made without displacements and discontents; they were as doggedly and fiercely combated by one section of the people as they were eagerly welcomed by another.

In politics it was clear that the landed men would not readily allow power to lapse into the hands of the 'New men'—"the men from Manchester"—and on the other hand these would naturally expect a share in the government of a country whose trade and wealth were controlled by them. Out of this fundamental difference rose a long and bitter struggle, reflected in the quarrels over the different Reform Bills. Nor did the admission of the factory-owners and the richer part of the middle classes to a share of power end the struggle. The thinking, politically minded working men who abounded in the industrial centres desired a voice in affairs, and, being denied it, fought for it in the ranks of the Chartist.

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It was no simple desire for political power that actuated this last section. They demanded it as the only means by which they could hope to improve the intolerable conditions under which they worked and lived. The wealth that had poured into the country had not benefited them; they were as miserable in the early years of plenty as they had been in the famine years at the beginning of the century. Money there was, but it was concentrated in comparatively few hands, and served but to accentuate the difference between rich and poor. The profits of the great industries remained in the hands of the masters, the men had but a very small share in them.

The owners of factories and ships built themselves beautiful houses, far from the reek of the towns where their money was made, or else bought the mansions of the impoverished nobles. Their workmen were crowded together in the mushroom towns that had sprung up, where the housing problem was worse than anything we can imagine to-day—and worse still because it was not considered as a problem at all.

Not only were the towns overcrowded, but they were badly built, and the most elementary laws of decency and hygiene were utterly disregarded. Open gutters were too frequently the only drains in crowded quarters, and the water-supply was often a matter of chance. Luck dictated the supply, whether it was from good wells or the seepings of the cemeteries. No wonder that typhus and cholera and other scourges now happily extinct in this country were among the accepted commonplaces of life in the poorer quarters of most towns.

At no time in the world's history was the doctrine that man is not his brother's keeper more fervently acted upon than during the fifty years or so after the Napoleonic wars. With a few honourable exceptions, employers offered their workers the very lowest wages that would keep body and soul together. Wages were calculated not on the basis of

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individuals, but of families. It was expected that every member of a family, from the father and mother to the youngest toddling child, should work, and that their united pittance should just keep them above the starvation line. The system was further strengthened by the hiring out of paupers and pauper children to the factories at still lower rates. Not only were payments scandalously low and hours scandalously long, but the scenes of brutality, dirt, and squalor in which those hours were passed, alike in factory and mine, were incredibly horrible.

Such were conditions until nearly half the century was past. The State was not thought to owe any duty to its people. Yet before the second half had closed conditions of labour and living, the care of the sick and aged, the provision of at least a minimum of education for all, the establishment of an adequate control over sanitation and public health, were all recognized as falling within its essential duties.

This meant that not only had individuals like Lord Shaftesbury and Robert Owen devoted their labour and enthusiasm to the cause of humanity, but that public opinion and the public conscience had undergone a revolution. A new kind of public mind, a new attitude to life, a new faith and a new hope—surely that is the biggest thing in history when it arises.

Histories written after the event can give an *account* of the evolution of this new attitude to humanity, but they cannot help us to see for ourselves just how it came about. Only reliving the past can help us to do that—only entering into the lives of people long dead and seeing passing events through their eyes. Fortunately it is possible for us to achieve that seeming impossibility if we are prepared to go back through the open portals of literature.

Writers, whether of poems, plays, or novels, cannot help reflecting the life that is around them if they are of their age and writing for it. They do not often set out deliber-

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ately to recount historical events, but they do something more valuable. They show us the kind of people who made the events, or to whom they happened. It is for this reason that it is impossible to divorce the study of literature from the study of history if any perspective at all is to be kept.

How much, for instance, should we really understand of the fourteenth century if Chaucer and Langland were unknown, or of the people of the Tudor epoch if Shakespeare and his lesser contemporaries were ignored? What sort of a picture should we have of the eighteenth century if Horace Walpole, Fielding and Richardson, Johnson, Sheridan, or the sprightly Fanny Burney were left out of account?

Similarly with the nineteenth century. In the pages of its writers all the changes and developments of that changing time are clearly reflected, when they are not foreshadowed.

The cool detachment of Jane Austen from all interests save those of the comfortable 'county' circles she describes yields place to the strivings and dissatisfactions of Disraeli, Kingsley, and others, and these in their turn give way to the broad understanding of human needs and sympathies, the intimate portrayal of the joys and sorrows and humours of men and women of every class and kind, that makes the world of Dickens live for us again.

It is not lack of material that makes the study of the literature of this period difficult; it is its very superabundance. Poets, satirists, dramatists, novelists, essayists—they are so many that it must be a matter of years before one can become familiar with them all.

That is the reason for this book. It is an attempt to help those who are interested in the history of this most teeming century to get a clear idea of the life that its people lived. An attempt has been made to select from its representative novelists passages that illustrate as many different facets of that life as possible. The novelists have been chosen because they are most concerned with the warp and woof of everyday

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life. They do not despise those trifles which go so far to build up the daily round of life in any century. In their pages the nineteenth century describes itself with its own voice, and does it far more engagingly than if the task were left to any third person.

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COUNTRY HOUSES NORTHANGER ABBEY

JANE AUSTEN

AS they drew near the end of their journey, her impatience for a sight of the abbey, for some time suspended by his [Henry Tilney's] conversation on subjects very different, returned in full force, and every bend in the road was expected, with solemn awe, to afford a glimpse of its massy walls of grey stone, rising amid a grove of ancient oaks, with the last beams of the sun playing in beautiful splendour on its high Gothic windows. But so low did the building stand, that she found herself passing through the great gates of the lodge, into the very grounds of Northanger, without having discerned even an antique chimney.

She knew not that she had any right to be surprized, but there was something in this mode of approach which she certainly had not expected. To pass between lodges of a modern appearance, to find herself with such ease in the very precincts of the abbey, and driven so rapidly along a smooth, level road of fine gravel, without obstacle, alarm or solemnity of any kind, struck her as odd and inconsistent. She was not long at leisure, however, for such considerations. A sudden scud of rain driving full in her face, made it impossible for her to observe anything further, and fixed all her thoughts on the welfare of her new straw bonnet: and she was actually under the abbey walls, was springing, with

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Henry's assistance, from the carriage, was beneath the shelter of the old porch, and had even passed on to the hall, where her friend and the General were waiting to welcome her, without feeling one awful foreboding of future misery to herself, or one moment's suspicion of any past scenes of horror being acted within the solemn edifice. The breeze had not seemed to waft the sighs of the murderer to her; it had wasted nothing worse than a thick mizzling rain, and having given a good shake to her habit, she was ready to be shown into the common drawing-room, and capable of considering where she was.

An abbey! Yes, it was delightful to be really in an abbey! But she doubted, as she looked round the room, whether anything within her observation would have given her the consciousness. The furniture was in all the profusion and elegance of modern taste. The fireplace, where she had expected the ample width and ponderous carving of former times, was contracted to a Rumford, with slabs of plain, though handsome, marble, and ornaments over it of the prettiest English china. The windows, to which she looked with peculiar dependence, from having heard the General talk of his preserving them in their Gothic form with reverential care, were yet less what her fancy had portrayed. To be sure the pointed arch was preserved, the form of them was Gothic, they might even be casements, but every pane was so large, so clear, so light. To an imagination which had hoped for the smallest divisions and the heaviest stonework, for painted glass, dirt, and cobwebs, the difference was very distressing.

The General, perceiving how her eye was employed, began to talk of the smallness of the room and simplicity of the furniture, where everything being for daily use, pretended only to comfort, etc., flattering himself, however, that there were some apartments in the abbey not unworthy her notice, and was proceeding to mention the costly gilding of one in

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particular, when taking out his watch, he stopped short, to pronounce it, with surprize, within twenty minutes of five! This seemed the word of separation, and Catherine found herself hurried away by Miss Tilney, in such a manner as convinced her that the strictest punctuality to the family hours would be expected at Northanger.

Returning through the large and lofty hall, they ascended a broad staircase of shining oak, which, after many flights, and many landing-places, brought them upon a long wide gallery. On one side it had a range of doors, and it was lighted on the other by windows, which Catherine had only time to discover looked into a quadrangle, before Miss Tilney led the way into a chamber, and, scarcely staying to hope she would find it comfortable, left her with an anxious entreaty that she would make as little alteration as possible in her dress.

A moment's glance was enough to satisfy Catherine that her apartment was very unlike the one which Henry had endeavoured to alarm her by the description of. It was by no means unreasonably large, and contained neither tapestry nor velvet. The walls were papered, the floor was carpeted, the windows were neither less perfect nor more dim than those of the drawing-room below; the furniture, though not of the latest fashion, was handsome and comfortable, and the air of the room altogether far from uncheerful. Her heart instantaneously at ease on this point, she resolved to lose no time in particular examination of anything, as she greatly dreaded disobliging the General by any delay. Her habit therefore was thrown off with all possible haste, and she was preparing to unpin the linen package, which the chaise seat had conveyed for her immediate accommodation, when her eye suddenly fell on a large high chest, standing in a deep recess on one side of the fireplace. The sight of it made her start; and, forgetting everything else, she stood gazing on it in motionless wonder, while these thoughts crossed her:

“This is strange indeed! I did not expect such a sight as

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this! An immense heavy chest! What can it hold? Why should it be placed here? Pushed back, too, as if meant to be out of sight! I will look into it; cost me what it may, I will look into it, and directly too—by daylight. If I stay until evening my candle may go out." She advanced and examined it closely; it was of cedar, curiously inlaid with some darker wood, and raised about a foot from the ground on a carved stand of the same. The lock was silver, though tarnished from age; at each end were the imperfect remains of handles also of silver, broken perhaps prematurely by some strange violence; and on the centre of the lid was a mysterious cipher in the same metal. Catherine bent over it intently, but without being able to distinguish anything with certainty. She could not, in whatever direction she took it, believe the last letter to be a T; and yet that it should be anything else in that house was a circumstance to raise no common degree of astonishment. If not originally theirs, by what strange events could it have fallen into the Tilney family?

Her fearful curiosity was every moment growing greater; and seizing with trembling hands, the hasp of the lock, she resolved, at all hazards, to satisfy herself at least of the contents. With difficulty, for something seemed to resist her efforts, she raised the lid a few inches; but at that moment a sudden knocking at the door of the room made her, starting, quit her hold, and the lid closed with alarming violence. This ill-timed intruder was Miss Tilney's maid, sent by her mistress to be of use to Miss Morland; and though Catherine immediately dismissed her, it recalled her to the sense of what she ought to be doing, and forced her, in spite of her anxious desire to penetrate this mystery, to proceed in her dressing without further delay. Her progress was not quick, for her thoughts and her eyes were still bent on the object so well calculated to interest and alarm; and though she dared not waste a moment upon a second attempt, she could not remain many paces from the chest. At length, however, having

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slipped one arm into her gown, her toilet seemed so nearly finished, that the impatience of her curiosity might be safely indulged. One moment surely might be spared; and so desperate should be the exertion of her strength, that unlessecured by supernatural means, the lid in one moment should be thrown back. With this spirit she sprang forward, and her confidence did not deceive her. Her resolute effort threw back the lid, and gave to her astonished eyes the view of a white cotton counterpane, properly folded, reposing at one end of the chest in undisputed possession!

She was gazing on it with the first blush of surprise, when Miss Tilney, anxious for her friend's being ready, entered the room, and to the rising shame of having harboured for some minutes an absurd expectation, was then added the shame of being caught in so idle a search. "That is a curious old chest, is it not?" said Miss Tilney, as Catherine hastily closed it, and turned away to the glass. "It is impossible to say how many generations it has been here. How it came to be first put in this room I know not, but I have not had it moved, because I thought it might sometimes be of use in holding hats and bonnets. The worst of it is, that its weight makes it difficult to open. In that corner, however, it is at least out of the way."

Catherine had no leisure for speech, being at once blushing, tying her gown, and forming wise resolutions with the most violent dispatch. . . .

Miss Tilney, understanding in part her friend's curiosity to see the house, soon revived the subject; and her father being, contrary to Catherine's expectations, unprovided with any pretence for further delay, beyond that of stopping five minutes to order refreshments to be in the room by their return, was at last ready to escort them.

They set forward; and, with a grandeur of air, a dignified step, which caught the eye, but could not shake the doubts of the well-read Catherine, he led the way across the hall,

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through the common drawing-room and one useless ante-chamber, into a room magnificent both in size and furniture, the real drawing-room, used only with company of consequence. It was very noble, very grand, very charming, was all that Catherine had to say, for her undiscriminating eye scarcely discerned the colour of the satin, and all minuteness of praise, all praise that had such meaning, was supplied by the General: the costliness or elegance of any room's fitting-up could be nothing to her; she cared for no furniture of a more modern date than the fifteenth century. When the General had satisfied his own curiosity, in a close examination of each well-known ornament, they proceeded to the library, an apartment in its way of equal magnificence, exhibiting a collection of books, on which an humble man might have looked with pride. Catherine heard, admired, and wondered with more genuine feeling than before, gathered all she could from this storehouse of knowledge by running over the titles of half a shelf, and was ready to proceed. But suites of apartments did not spring up with her wishes. Large as was the building, she had already visited the greatest part; though on being told that, with the addition of the kitchen, the six or seven rooms she had now seen surrounded three sides of the court, she could scarcely believe it, or overcome the suspicion of there being many chambers secreted. It was some relief, however, that they were to return to the rooms in common use, by passing through a few of less importance, looking into the court, which, with occasional passages not wholly unintricate, connected the different sides; and she was further soothed in her progress by being told that she was treading what had once been a cloister, having traces of cells pointed out to her, and observing several doors that were neither opened nor explained to her; by finding herself successively in a billiard-room and in the General's private apartment, without comprehending their connection, or being able to turn aright when she left them; and lastly by passing through

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a dark little room that owned Henry's authority, and was strewed with his litter of books, guns, and great-coats.

From the dining-room, of which, though already seen, and always to be seen at five o'clock, the General could not forgo the pleasure of pacing out the length, for the more certain information of Miss Morland, as to what she neither doubted nor cared for, they proceeded by quick communication to the kitchen—the ancient kitchen of the convent, rich in the massy walls and smoke of former days, and in the stoves and hot closets of the present. The General's improving hand had not loitered here: every modern invention to facilitate the labours of the cooks had been adopted within this their spacious theatre; and, when the genius of others had failed, his own had often produced the perfection wanted. His endowments of this spot alone might at any time have placed him high among the benefactors of the convent.

With the walls of the kitchen ended all the antiquity of the abbey; the fourth side of the quadrangle having, on account of its decaying state, been removed by the General's father, and the present erected in its place. All that was venerable ceased here. The new building was not only new, but declared itself to be so; intended only for offices, and enclosed behind by stableyards, no uniformity of architecture had been thought necessary. Catherine could have raved at the hand that had swept away what must have been beyond the value of all the rest, for the purposes of mere domestic economy; and would willingly have been spared the mortification of a walk through scenes so fallen, had the General allowed it: but if he had a vanity, it was in the arrangement of his offices; and as he was convinced that, to a mind like Miss Morland's, a view of the accommodations and comforts by which the labours of her inferiors were softened, must always be gratifying, he should make no apology for leading her on. They took a slight survey of it all; and Catherine was

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impressed, beyond her expectation, by their multiplicity and their convenience. The purposes for which a few shapeless pantries, and a comfortless scullery, were deemed sufficient at Fullerton, were here carried on in appropriate divisions, commodious and roomy. The number of servants continually appearing did not strike her less than the number of their offices. Wherever they went some patterned girl stopped to curtsey, or some footman in dishabille sneaked off. Yet this was an abbey! How inexpressibly different in these domestic arrangements from such as she had read about: from abbeys and castles, in which, though certainly larger than Northanger, all the dirty work of the house was done by two pair of female hands at the utmost. How they could get through it all had often amazed Mrs Allen; and, when Catherine saw what was necessary here, she began to be amazed herself.

They returned to the hall, that the chief staircase might be ascended, and the beauty of its wood and ornaments of rich carving might be pointed out: having gained the top, they turned in an opposite direction from the gallery in which her room lay, and shortly entered one on the same plan, but superior in length and breadth. She was here shown successively into three large bedchambers, with their dressing-rooms, most completely and handsomely fitted up: everything that money and taste could do, to give comfort and elegance to apartments, had been bestowed on these; and, being furnished within the last five years, they were perfect in all that would be generally pleasing, and wanting in all that could give pleasure to Catherine. As they were surveying the last, the General, after slightly naming a few of the distinguished characters by whom they had at times been honoured, turned with a smiling countenance to Catherine and ventured to hope that henceforward some of their earliest tenants might be "our friends from Fullerton."

From "Northanger Abbey"

IMPROVEMENTS

IMPROVEMENTS

JANE AUSTEN

HE had been visiting a friend in a neighbouring county, and that friend having recently had his grounds laid out by an improver, Mr Rushworth had returned with his head full of the subject, and very eager to be improving his own place in the same way; and, though not saying much to the purpose, could talk of nothing else. The subject had already been handled in the drawing-room; it was revived in the dining-parlour. Miss Bertram's attention was evidently his chief aim; and though her deportment showed rather conscious superiority than any solicitude to oblige him, the mention of Sotherton Court, and the ideas attached to it, gave her a feeling of complacency, which prevented her from being very ungracious.

"I wish you could see Compton," said he, "it is the most complete thing! I never saw a place so altered in my life. I told Smith I did not know where I was. The approach, *now*, is one of the finest things in the country: you see the house in the most surprising manner. I declare, when I got back to Sotherton yesterday, it looked like a prison—quite a dismal old prison."

"Oh, for shame!" cried Mrs Norris. "A prison, indeed? Sotherton Court is the noblest old place in the world."

"It wants improvement, ma'am, beyond anything. I never saw a place that wanted so much improvement in my life: and it is so forlorn, that I do not know what can be done with it."

"No wonder Mr Rushworth should think so at present," said Mrs Grant to Mrs Norris, with a smile; "but depend upon it, Sotherton will have *every* improvement in time that his heart can desire."

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"I must try to do something with it," said Mr Rushworth, "but I do not know what. I hope I shall have some good friend to help me."

"Your best friend upon such an occasion," said Miss Bertram calmly, "would be Mr Repton, I imagine."

"That is what I was thinking of. As he has done so well by Smith, I think I had better have him at once. His terms are five guineas a day."

"Well, and if they were *ten*," cried Mrs Norris, "I am sure *you* need not regard it. The expense need not be any impediment. I would have everything done in the best style and made as nice as possible. Such a place as Sotherton Court deserves everything that taste and money can do. You have space to work upon there, and grounds that will reward you. For my own part, if I had anything the fiftieth part of the size of Sotherton, I should be always planting and improving, for, naturally, I am excessively fond of it. It would be too ridiculous for me to attempt anything where I am now, with my little half-acre. It would be quite a burlesque. But if I had more room, I should take a prodigious delight in improving and planting. We did a vast deal that way at the Parsonage: we made it quite a different place from what it was when we first had it. You young ones do not remember much about it, perhaps; but if dear Sir Thomas were here, he could tell you what improvements we made: and a great deal more would have been done, but for poor Mr Norris's sad state of health. He could never get out, poor man, to enjoy anything, and *that* disheartened me from doing several things that Sir Thomas and I used to talk of. If it had not been for *that* we should have carried on the garden wall, and made the plantation to shut out the church-yard, just as Dr Grant has done. We were always doing something as it was. It was only the spring twelve-month before Mr Norris's death, that we put in the apricot against the stable wall, which is now grown such a noble tree,

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and getting to such perfection, sir," addressing herself then to Dr Grant.

"The tree thrives well, beyond a doubt, madam," replied Dr Grant. "The soil is good; and I never pass it without regretting that the fruit should be so little worth the trouble of gathering."

"Sir, it is a Moor Park, we bought it as a Moor Park, and it cost us—that is, it was a present from Sir Thomas, but I saw the bill—and I know it cost seven shillings, and was charged as a Moor Park."

"You were imposed on, ma'am," replied Dr Grant: "these potatoes have as much the flavour of a Moor Park apricot as the fruit from that tree. It is an insipid fruit at the best; but a good apricot is eatable, which none from my garden are."

"The truth is, ma'am," said Mrs Grant, pretending to whisper across the table to Mrs Norris, "that Dr Grant hardly knows what the natural taste of our apricot is; he is scarcely ever indulged with one, for it is so valuable a fruit; with a little assistance, and ours is such a remarkably large, fair sort, that what with early tarts and preserves my cook contrives to get them all."

Mrs Norris, who had begun to redden, was appeased; and for a little while other subjects took place of the improvements at Sotherton. Dr Grant and Mrs Norris were seldom good friends; their acquaintance had begun in dilapidations, and their habits were totally dissimilar.

After a short interruption, Mr Rushworth began again. "Smith's place is the admiration of all the country; and it was a mere nothing before Repton took it in hand. I think I shall have Repton."

"Mr Rushworth," said Lady Bertram, "if I were you, I would have a very pretty shrubbery. One likes to get out into a shrubbery in fine weather."

Mr Rushworth was eager to assure her ladyship of his

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acquiescence, and tried to make out something complimentary: but, between his submission to *her* taste, and his having always intended the same himself, with superadded objects of professing attention to the comfort of ladies in general, and of insinuating that there was only one whom he was anxious to please, he grew puzzled, and Edmund was glad to put an end to his speech by a proposal of wine. Mr Rushworth, however, though not usually a great talker, had still more to say on the subject next his heart. "Smith has not much above a hundred acres altogether, in his grounds, which is little enough, and makes it more surprising that the place can have been so improved. Now, at Sotherton, we have a good seven hundred, without reckoning the water-meadows; so that I think, if so much could be done at Compton, we need not despair. There have been two or three fine old trees cut down, that grew too near the house, and it opens the prospect amazingly, which makes me think that Repton, or anybody of that sort, would certainly have the avenue at Sotherton down; the avenue that leads from the west front to the top of the hill, you know," turning to Miss Bertram particularly as he spoke. But Miss Bertram thought it most becoming to reply:

"The avenue! Oh! I do not recollect it. I really know very little of Sotherton."

Fanny, who was sitting at the other side of Edmund, exactly opposite to Miss Crawford, and who had been attentively listening, now looked at him, and said, in a low voice:

"Cut down an avenue! What a pity! Does it not make you think of Cowper? 'Ye fallen avenues, once more I mourn your fate unmerited.'"

He smiled as he answered, "I am afraid the avenue stands a bad chance, Fanny."

"I should like to see Sotherton before it is cut down, to see the place as it is now, in its old state; but I do not suppose I shall."

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"Have you never been there? No, you never can; and, unluckily, it is out of distance for a ride. I wish we could contrive it."

"Oh! it does not signify. Whenever I do see it, you will tell me how it has been altered."

"I collect," said Miss Crawford, "that Sotherton is an old place, and a place of some grandeur. In any particular style of building?"

"The house was built in Elizabeth's time, and is a large, regular brick building; heavy, but respectable-looking, and has many good rooms. It is ill-placed. It stands in one of the lowest spots of the park; in that respect, unfavourable for improvement. But the woods are fine, and there is a stream, which, I dare say, might be made a good deal of. Mr Rushworth is quite right, I think, in meaning to give it a modern dress, and I have no doubt that it will all be done extremely well."

Miss Crawford listened with submission, and said to herself, "He is a well-bred man; he makes the best of it."

"I do not wish to influence Mr Rushworth," he continued; "but had I a place to new-fashion, I should not put myself into the hands of an improver. I would rather have an inferior degree of beauty of my own choice, and acquired progressively. I would rather abide by my own blunders than by his."

"*You* would know what you were about, of course; but that would not suit *me*. I have no eye or ingenuity for such matters, but as they are before me; and had I a place of my own in the country, I should be most thankful to any Mr Repton who would undertake it, and give me as much beauty as he could for my money, and I should never look at it till it was complete."

"It would be delightful to *me* to see the progress of it all," said Fanny.

"Ay, you have been brought up to it. It was no part of

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my education; and the only dose I ever had, being administered by not the first favourite in the world, has made me consider improvements *in hand* as the greatest of nuisances. Three years ago, the Admiral, my honoured uncle, bought a cottage at Twickenham for us all to spend our holidays in; and my aunt and I went down to it quite in raptures; but it being excessively pretty it was soon found necessary to be improved, and for three months we were all dirt and confusion, without a gravel walk to step on, or a bench fit for use. I would have everything as complete as possible in the country, shrubberies and flower-gardens, and rustic seats innumerable: but it must all be done without my care. Henry is different, he loves to be doing."

Edmund was sorry to hear Miss Crawford, whom he was much disposed to admire, speak so freely of her uncle. It did not suit his sense of propriety, and he was silenced, till induced by further smiles and liveliness, to put the matter by for the present.

"Mr Bertram," said she, "I have tidings of my harp at last. I am assured that it is safe at Northampton; and there it has probably been this ten days, in spite of the solemn assurances we have so often received to the contrary." Edmund expressed his pleasure and surprise. "The truth is, that our inquiries were too direct; we sent a servant, we went ourselves: this will not do at seventy miles from London; but this morning we heard of it in the right way. It was seen by some farmer, and he told the miller, and the miller told the butcher, and the butcher's son-in-law left word at the shop."

"I am very glad you have heard of it, by whatever means, and hope there will be no farther delay."

"I am to have it to-morrow; but how do you think it is to be conveyed? Not by a wagon or cart: oh no! nothing of that kind could be hired in the village. I might just as well have asked for porters and a hand-barrow."

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" You would find it difficult, I dare say, just now, in the middle of a very late hay-harvest, to hire a horse and cart."

" I was astonished to find what a piece of work was made of it! To want a horse and cart in the country seemed impossible, so I told my maid to speak for one directly; and as I cannot look out of my dressing-closet without seeing one farm-yard, nor walk in the shrubbery without passing another, I thought it would be only ask and have, and was rather grieved that I could not give the advantage to all. Guess my surprize when I found that I had been asking the most unreasonable, the most impossible thing in the world; had offended all the farmers, all the labourers, all the hay in the parish! As for Dr Grant's bailiff, I believe I had better keep out of *his* way; and my brother-in-law himself, who is all kindness in general, looked rather black upon me, when he found what I had been at."

" You could not be expected to have thought on the subject before; but when you *do* think of it, you must see the importance of getting in the grass. The hire of a cart at any time might not be so easy as you suppose; our farmers are not in the habit of letting them out: but in harvest it must be quite out of their power to spare a horse."

" I shall understand all your ways in time; but, coming down with the true London maxim that everything is to be got with money, I was a little embarrassed at first by the sturdy independence of your country customs. However, I am to have my harp fetched to-morrow. Henry, who is good-nature itself, has offered to fetch it in his barouche. Will it not be honourably conveyed? " . . .

The subject of improving grounds, meanwhile, was still under consideration among the others; and Mrs Grant could not help addressing her brother. . . .

" My dear Henry, have *you* nothing to say? You have been an improver yourself, and from what I hear of Everingham, it may vie with any place in England. Its natural

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beauties, I am sure, are great. Everingham as it *used* to be, was perfect in my estimation; such a happy fall of ground, and such timber! What would I not give to see it again!" ...

"As for improvement, there was very little for me to do—too little; I should have liked to have been busy much longer."

"You are fond of the sort of thing?" said Julia.

"Excessively; but what with the natural advantages of the ground, which pointed, even to a very young eye, what little remained to be done, and my own consequent resolutions, I had not been of age three months when Everingham was what it is now. My plan was laid at Westminster, a little altered, perhaps, at Cambridge, and at one-and-twenty executed. I am inclined to envy Mr Rushworth for having so much happiness yet before him. I have been a devourer of my own."

"Those who see quickly, will resolve quickly, and act quickly," said Julia. "You can never want employment. Instead of envying Mr Rushworth, you should assist him with your opinion."

Mrs Grant, hearing the latter part of this speech, enforced it warmly; persuaded that no judgment could be equal to her brother's; and as Miss Bertram caught at the idea likewise, and gave it her full support, declaring that, in her opinion, it was infinitely better to consult with friends and disinterested advisers, than immediately to throw the business into the hands of a professional man, Mr Rushworth was very ready to request the favour of Mr Crawford's assistance; and Mr Crawford, after properly deprecating his own abilities, was quite at his service in any way that could be useful.

From "Manfield Park"

ULLATHORNE COURT

ULLATHORNE COURT

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

MR THORNE's house was called Ullathorne Court, and was properly so called; for the house itself formed two sides of a quadrangle, which was completed on the other two sides by a wall about twenty feet high. This wall was built of cut stone, rudely cut indeed, and now much worn, but of a beautiful rich tawny yellow colour, the effect of that stone-crop of minute growth, which it had taken three centuries to produce. The top of this wall was ornamented by huge round stone balls, of the same colour as the wall itself. Entrance into the court was had through a pair of iron gates, so massive that no one could comfortably open or close them, consequently they were rarely disturbed. From the gateway two paths led obliquely across the court; that to the left reaching the hall-door, which was in the corner made by the angle of the house, and that to the right leading to the back entrance, which was at the further end of the longer portion of the building.

With those who are now adepts in contriving house accommodation it will militate much against Ullathorne Court, that no carriage could be brought to the hall-door. If you enter Ullathorne at all, you must do so, fair reader, on foot, or at least in a Bath-chair. No vehicle drawn by horses ever comes within that iron gate. But this is nothing to the next horror that will encounter you. On entering the front-door, which you will do by no very grand portal, you will find yourself immediately in the dining-room. What,—no hall? exclaims my luxurious friend, accustomed to all the comfortable appurtenances of modern life. Yes, kind sir, a noble hall, if you will but observe it; a true old English hall of excellent dimensions for a country gentleman's family; but, if you please, no dining-parlour.

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Both Mr and Miss Thorne were proud of this peculiarity of their dwelling, though the brother was once all but tempted by his friends to alter it. They delighted in the knowledge that they, like Cedric, positively dined in their true hall, even though they so dined *tête-à-tête*. But though they never owned, they felt, and endeavoured to remedy the discomfort of such an arrangement. A huge screen partitioned off the front-door and a portion of the hall, and from the angle so screened, a second door led into the passage, which ran along the larger side of the house next to the courtyard. Either my reader or I must be a bad hand at topography, if it be not clear that the great hall forms the ground-floor of the smaller portion of the mansion, that which was to your left as you entered the iron gate, and that it occupies the whole of this wing of the building. It must be equally clear that it looks out on a trim mown lawn, through three quadrangular windows with stone mullions, each window divided into a larger portion at the bottom, and a smaller portion at the top, and each portion again divided into five by perpendicular stone supporters. There may be windows which give a better light than such as these, and it may be, as my Utilitarian friend observes, that the giving of light is the desired object of a window. I will not argue the point with him. Indeed I cannot. But I shall not the less die in the assured conviction that no sort or description of window is capable of imparting half so much happiness to mankind as that which had been adopted at Ullathorne Court . . . nothing can equal the square mullioned windows of the Tudor architects.

The hall was hung round with family female insipidities by Lely, and unprepossessing male Thornes in red coats by Kneller; each Thorne having been let into a panel in the wainscoting in the proper manner. At the further end of the room was a huge fire-place, which afforded much ground of difference between the brother and sister. An antiquated

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grate that would hold about a hundred-weight of coal, had been stuck on to the hearth by Mr Thorne's father. This hearth had, of course, been intended for the consumption of wood fagots, and the iron dogs for the purpose were still standing, though half-buried in the masonry of the grate. Miss Thorne was very anxious to revert to the dogs. The dear good old creature was always anxious to revert to anything, and had she been systematically indulged, would doubtless in time have reflected that fingers were made before forks, and reverted accordingly. But in the affairs of the fire-place, Mr Thorne would not revert. Country gentlemen around him, all had comfortable grates in their dining-rooms. He was not exactly the man to have suggested a modern usage; but he was not so far prejudiced as to banish those which his father had prepared for his use. Mr Thorne had, indeed, once suggested that with very little contrivance the front door might have been so altered, as to open at least into the passage; but on hearing this, his sister Monica, such was Miss Thorne's name, had been taken ill, and remained so for a week. Before she came downstairs she received a pledge from her brother that the entrance should never be changed in her lifetime.

At the end of the hall opposite to the fire-place a door led into the drawing-room, which was of equal size, and lighted with precisely similar windows. But yet the aspect of the room was very different. It was papered, and the ceiling, which in the hall showed the old rafters, was whitened and finished with a modern cornice. Miss Thorne's drawing-room, or withdrawing-room, as she always called it, was a beautiful apartment. The windows opened on to the full extent of the lovely trim garden; immediately before the windows were plots of flowers in stiff, stately, stubborn little beds, each bed surrounded by a stone coping of its own; beyond, there was a low parapet wall, on which stood urns and images, fauns, nymphs, satyrs, and a whole tribe of

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Pan's followers; and then again, beyond that, a beautiful lawn sloped away to a sunk fence which divided the garden from the park. Mr Thorne's study was at the end of the drawing-room, and beyond that were the kitchen and the offices. Doors opened into both Miss Thorne's withdrawing-room, and Mr Thorne's sanctum from the passage above alluded to; which as it came to the latter room, widened itself so as to make space for the huge black oak stairs, which led to the upper regions.

Such was the interior of Ullathorne Court. . . . It is the outside of Ullathorne that is so lovely. Let the tourist get admission at least into the garden, and fling himself on that soft sward just opposite to the exterior angle of the house. He will get there the double frontage, and enjoy that which is so lovely—the expanse of architectural beauty without the formal dulness of one long line.

It is the colour of Ullathorne that is so remarkable. It is all of that delicious tawny hue that no stone can give, unless it has on it the vegetable richness of centuries. Strike the wall with your hand, and you will think that the stone has on it no covering; but rub it carefully, and you will find that the colour comes off on your finger. No colourist that ever yet worked from a palette has been able to come up to this rich colouring of years crowding themselves on years.

Ullathorne is a high building for a country house, for it possesses three stories; and in each story the windows are of the same sort as that described, though varying in size, and varying also in their lines across the house. Those of the ground floor are all uniform in size and position. But those above are irregular both in size and place, and this irregularity gives a bizarre and not unpicturesque appearance to the house. Along the top, on every side, runs a low parapet, which nearly hides the roof, and at the corners are more figures of fauns and satyrs.

Such is Ullathorne House. But we must say one word of

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the approach to it, which shall include all the description we mean to give of the church also. The picturesque old church of St Ewold's stands immediately opposite to the iron gates which open into the court, and is all but surrounded by the branches of the lime-trees, which form the avenue leading up to the house from both sides. This avenue is magnificent, but it would lose much of its value in the eyes of many proprietors, by the fact that the road through it is not private property. It is a public lane between hedgerows, with a broad grass margin on each side of the road, from which the lime-trees spring. Ullathorne therefore does not stand absolutely surrounded by its own grounds, though Mr Thorne is owner of all the adjacent land. This, however, is a source of very little annoyance to him. Men, when they are acquiring property think much of such things, but they who live where their ancestors have lived for years, do not feel the misfortune. It never occurred either to Mr or Miss Thorne that they were not sufficiently private, because the world at large might, if it so wished, walk or drive by their iron gates.

From "Barchester Towers"

VILLAGES AND FARMS

OUR VILLAGE

M. R. MITFORD

WE will begin at the lower end, and proceed up the hill.

The tidy, square, red cottage on the right hand, with the long well-stocked garden by the side of the road, belongs to a retired publican from a neighbouring town; a substantial person with a comely wife; one who piques himself on independence and idleness, talks politics, reads newspapers, hates the minister, and cries out for reform. He introduced into our peaceful vicinage the rebellious innovation of an illumination on the Queen's acquittal. . . . Oh! how he shone that night with candles, and laurel, and white bows, and gold paper, and a transparency (originally designed for a pocket-handkerchief) with a flaming portrait of her Majesty, hatted and feathered in red ochre. . . . He would like an illumination once a month; for it must not be concealed that, in spite of gardening, of newspaper reading, of jaunting about in his little cart, and frequenting both church and meeting, our worthy neighbour begins to feel the weariness of idleness. He hangs over his gate, and tries to entice passengers to stop and chat; he volunteers little jobs all round, smokes cherry-trees to cure the blight, and traces and blows up all the wasp's nests in the parish. I have seen a great many wasps in our garden to-day, and shall enchant him with the intelligence. He even assists his wife in her dustings and sweepings. Poor man! he is a very respectable person, and would be a very happy one if he would add a little employment to his dignity. It would be the salt of life to him.

Next to his house, though parted from it by another long

OUR VILLAGE

garden with a yew arbour at the end, is the pretty dwelling of the shoemaker, a pale, sickly-looking black-haired man, the very model of sober industry. There he sits in his little shop from early morning to late at night. An earthquake would hardly stir him; the illumination did not. He stuck immovably to his last, from the first lighting up, through the long blaze and the slow decay, till his large, solitary candle was the only light in the place. One cannot conceive anything more perfect than the contempt which the man of transparencies and the man of shoes must have felt for each other on that evening. . . .

The first house on the opposite side of the way is the blacksmith's; a gloomy dwelling where the sun never seems to shine; dark and smoky, within and without, like a forge. The blacksmith is a high officer in our little state, nothing less than a constable; but, alas! alas! when tumults arise, and the constable is called for, he will commonly be found in the thickest of the fray. Lucky would it be for his wife and her eight children if there were no public-house in the land: ^{dark} an inveterate inclination to enter those bewitching doors, is ^{dark} Mr Constable's only fault.

Next to this official dwelling is a spruce brick tenement, ^{brim} red, high, and narrow, boasting, one above the other, three sash-windows, the only sash-windows in the village, with a clematis on one side and a rose on the other, tall and narrow like itself. That slender mansion has a fine, genteel look. The little parlour seems made for Hogarth's old maid and her stunted footboy; for tea and card-parties—it would hold just one table; for the rustle of faded silks, and the splendour of old china; for the delight of four by honours, and a little snug, quiet scandal between the deals; for affected gentility and real starvation. This should have been its destiny; but fate has been unpropitious: it belongs to a plump, merry, bustling dame, with four fat, rosy, noisy children, the very essence of vulgarity and plenty.

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Then comes the village shop, like other village shops, multifarious as a bazaar; a repository for bread, shoes, tea, cheese, tape, ribands and bacon; for everything, in short, except the one particular thing which you happen to want at the moment, and will be sure not to find. The people are civil and thriving, and frugal withal; they have let the upper part of their house to two young women (one of them is a pretty, blue-eyed girl) who teach little children their ABC, and make caps and gowns for their mammas—parcel school-mistress, parcel mantua-maker. I believe they find adorning the body a more profitable occupation than adorning the mind.

Divided from the shop by a narrow yard, and opposite the shoemaker's, is a habitation of whose inmates I shall say nothing. A cottage—no—a miniature house, with many additions, little odds and ends of places, pantries, and what not; all angles and of a charming in-and-outness; a little bricked court before one half, and a little flower-yard before the other; the walls, old and weather-stained, covered with hollyhocks, roses, honeysuckles, and a great apricot-tree; the casement full of geraniums (ah, there is our superb white cat peeping out from among them); the closets (our landlord has the assurance to call them rooms) full of contrivances and corner-cupboards; and the little garden behind full of common flowers, tulips, pinks, larkspurs, peonies, stocks, and carnations, with an arbour of privet, not unlike a sentry-box, where one lives in a delicious green light, and looks out on the gayest of all gay flower-beds. That house was built on purpose to show in what an exceedingly small compass comfort may be packed. Well, I will loiter there no longer.

The next tenement is a place of importance, the Rose inn; a whitewashed building, retired from the road behind its fine swinging sign, with a little bow-window room coming out on one side, and forming, with our stable on the other, a sort of open square, which is the constant resort of carts, wagons,

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and return chaises. There are two carts there now, and mine host is serving them with beer in his eternal red waistcoat. He is a thriving man, and portly, as his waistcoat attests, which has been let out twice within this twelvemonth. Our landlord has a stirring wife, a hopeful son, and a daughter, the belle of the village; not so pretty as the fair nymph of the shoe-shop, and far less elegant, but ten times as fine; all curl-papers in the morning, like a porcupine, all curls in the afternoon, like a poodle, with more flounces than curl-papers, and more lovers than curls. Miss Phœbe is more fitted for town than for country; and to do her justice, she has a consciousness of that fitness, and turns her steps toward as often as she can. She is gone to B—— to-day with her last and principal lover, a recruiting sergeant—a man as tall as Sergeant Kite, and as impudent. Some day or other he will carry off Miss Phœbe.

In a line from the bow-window room is a low garden-wall, belonging to a house under repair—the white house opposite to the collar-maker's shop, with four lime-trees before it, and a wagon-load of bricks at the door. That house is the plaything of a wealthy, well-meaning, whimsical person who lives about a mile off. He has a passion for brick and mortar, and, being too wise to meddle with his own residence, diverts himself with altering, improving and re-improving, doing and undoing, here. It is a perfect Penelope's web. Carpenters and bricklayers have been at work for these eighteen months, and yet I sometimes stand and wonder whether anything has really been done. One exploit in last June was, however, by no means equivocal. Our good neighbour fancied that the limes shaded the rooms, and made them dark (there was not a creature in the house but the workmen), so he had all the leaves stripped from every tree. There they stood, poor miserable skeletons, as bare as Christmas under the glowing mid-summer sun. Nature revenged herself in her own sweet and gracious manner; fresh leaves

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sprang out, and at nearly Christmas the foliage was as brilliant as when the outrage was committed. . . .

We are now at the end of the street; a cross lane, a rope-walk shaded with limes and oaks and a cool, clear pond, overhung with elms, lead us to the bottom of the hill. There is still one house round the corner, ending in a picturesque wheeler's shop. The dwelling-house is more ambitious. Look at the fine flowered window-blinds, the green door with the brass knocker, and the somewhat prim but very civil person who is sending off a labouring man with sirs and curtsies enough for a prince of the blood. These are the curate's lodgings—apartments his landlady would call them: he lives with his own family four miles off, but once or twice a week he comes to his neat little parlour to write sermons, to marry, or to bury, as the case may require. Never were better or kinder people than his host and hostess: and there is a reflection of clerical importance about them since their connection with the Church which is quite edifying—a decorum, a gravity, a solemn politeness. Oh, to see the worthy wheeler carrying the gown after his lodger on a Sunday, nicely pinned up in his wife's best handkerchief!—or to hear him rebuke a squalling child or a squabbling woman! The curate is nothing to him. He is fit to be perpetual churchwarden.

We must now cross the lane into the shady rope-walk. That pretty white cottage opposite, which stands straggling at the end of the village in a garden full of flowers, belongs to our mason, the shortest of men, and his handsome, tall wife: he, a dwarf, with the voice of a giant; one starts when he begins to talk, as if he were shouting through a speaking-trumpet; she, the sister, daughter, and granddaughter of a long line of gardeners, and no contemptible one herself. It is very magnanimous in me not to hate her; for she beats me in my own way, in chrysanthemums, and dahlias, and the like gauds. Her plants are sure to live; mine have a sad

ANOTHER KIND OF VILLAGE

trick of dying, perhaps because I love them "not wisely, but too well," and kill them with over-kindness.

From "Our Village"

ANOTHER KIND OF VILLAGE—1837

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

WITH the exception of the dull high street, which had the usual characteristics of a small agricultural town, some sombre mansions, a dingy inn, and a petty bourse, Marney mainly consisted of a variety of narrow and crowded lanes formed by cottages built of rubble, or unhewn stones without cement, and, from age, or badness of material, looking as if they could scarcely hold together. The gaping chinks admitted every blast; the leaning chimneys had lost half their original height; the rotten rafters were evidently misplaced; while, in many instances the thatch, yawning in some parts to admit the wind and wet, and in all utter-unfit for its original purpose of giving protection from the weather, looked more like the top of a dunghill than a cottage. Before the doors of these cottages, and often surrounding them, ran open drains full of animal and vegetable refuse, decomposing into disease, or sometimes in their imperfect course filling foul pits or spreading into stagnant pools, while a concentrated solution of every species of dissolving filth was allowed to soak through, and thoroughly impregnate the walls and ground adjoining.

These wretched tenements seldom consisted of more than two rooms, in one of which the whole family, however numerous, were obliged to sleep, without distinction of age, or sex, or suffering. . . . These swarming walls had neither windows nor doors sufficient to keep out the weather, or admit the sun, or supply the means of ventilation; the humid and putrid roof of thatch exhaling malaria, like all other

rotten

Giving out

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decaying vegetable matter. The dwelling-rooms were neither boarded nor paved; and whether it was that some were situate in low and damp places occasionally flooded by the river, and usually much below the level of the road; or that the springs, as was often the case, would burst through the mud floor, the ground was at no time better than so much clay, while sometimes you might see little channels cut from the centre under the doorways to carry off the water, the door itself, removed from its hinges; a resting place for infancy in its deluged home. These hovels were in many instances not provided with the commonest conveniences of the rudest place; contiguous to every door might be observed the dungheap on which every kind of filth was accumulated for the purpose of being disposed of for manure, so that, when the poor man opened his narrow habitation in the hope of refreshing it with the breeze of summer, he was met with a mixture of gases from reeking dunghills.

The town of Marney was a metropolis of agricultural labour, for the proprietors of the neighbourhood, having acted for the last half-century on the system of destroying the cottages on their estates, in order to become exempted from the maintenance of the population, the expelled people had flocked to Marney, where, during the war, a manufactory had afforded them some relief, though its wheels had long ceased to disturb the waters of the Mar.

Deprived of this resource, they had again gradually spread themselves over that land which had, as it were, rejected them; and obtained from its churlish breast a niggardly subsistence. Their re-entrance into the neighbouring parishes was viewed with great suspicion; their renewed settlement opposed by every ingenious contrivance. Those who availed themselves of their labour were careful that they should not become dwellers on the soil; and though, from the excessive competition, there were few districts in the kingdom where the rate of wages was more depressed those who were

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fortunate enough to obtain the scant remuneration had, in addition to their toil, to endure, each morn and even a weary journey before they could reach the scene of their labour, or return to the squalid hovel which profaned the name of home. To that home, over which malaria hovered, and round whose shivering hearth were clustered other guests besides the exhausted family of toil, Fever, in every form, pale Consumption, exhausting Synochus, and trembling Ague, returned, after cultivating the broad fields of merry England, the bold British peasant, returned to encounter the worst of diseases, with a frame the least qualified to oppose them; a frame that, subdued by toil, was never sustained by animal food; drenched by tempest could not change its dripping rags; and was indebted for its scanty fuel to the windfalls of the woods. . . .

The morning after the arrival of Egremont at the Abbey, an unusual stir might have been observed in the high street of the town. Round the portico of the Green Dragon hotel and commercial inn a knot of principal personages, the chief lawyer, the brewer, the vicar himself, and several of those easy quidnuncs who abound in country towns, and who rank under the designation of retired gentlemen, were in close and earnest converse. In a short time a servant on horseback, in the Abbey livery, galloped up to the portico, and delivered a letter to the vicar. The excitement had now apparently greatly increased. On the opposite side of the way to the important group, a knot, in larger numbers, but deficient in quality, had formed themselves, and remained transfixed with gaping mouths and a curious, not to say alarmed air. The head constable walked up to the door of the Green Dragon, and, though he did not presume to join the principal group, was evidently in attendance, if required. The clock struck eleven; a cart had stopped to watch events, and a gentleman's coachman riding home with a led horse.

"Here they are!" said the brewer.

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"Lord Marney himself," said the lawyer.

"And Sir Vavasour Firebrace, I declare! I wonder how he came here," said a retired gentleman, who had been a tallow-chandler on Holborn Hill.

The vicar took off his hat, and all uncovered. Lord Marney and his brother magistrate rode briskly up to the inn, and rapidly dismounted.

"Well, Snigford," said his lordship, in a peremptory tone, "this is a pretty business; I'll have this stopped directly."

Fortunate man, if he succeeded in doing so! The torch of the incendiary had for the first time been introduced into the parish of Marney; and last night the primest stacks of the Abbey farm had blazed, a beacon to the agitated neighbourhood.

From "Sytill"

A GREAT FARMHOUSE

M. R. MITFORD

PASSING up the lane we used first to encounter a thick solid suburb of ricks of all sorts, shapes, and dimensions. Then came the farm, like a town; a magnificent series of buildings, stables, cart-houses, cow-houses, granaries, and barns, that might hold half the corn of the parish, placed at all angles to each other, and mixed with smaller habitations for pigs, dogs, and poultry. They formed, together with the old substantial farmhouse, a sort of amphitheatre, looking over a beautiful meadow, which swept greenly and abruptly down into fertile enclosures, richly set with hedgerow timber, oak, and ash, and elm. Both the meadow and the farmyard swarmed with inhabitants of the earth and of the air; horses, oxen, cows, calves, heifers, sheep and pigs; beautiful greyhounds, all manner of poultry, a tame goat, and a pet donkey.

The master of this land of plenty was well fitted to preside

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over it; a thick, stout man of middle height, and middle-aged, with a healthy ruddy, square face, all alive with intelligence and good-humour. There was a lurking jest in his eye, and a smile about the corners of his firmly closed lips, that gave assurance of good-fellowship. His voice was loud enough to have hailed a ship at sea without the assistance of a speaking-trumpet, wonderfully rich and round in its tones, and harmonising admirably with his bluff, jovial visage. He wore his dark shining hair combed straight over his forehead, and had a trick, when particularly merry, of stroking it down with his hand. The moment his hand approached his head, out flew a jest.

Besides his own great farm, the business of which seemed to go on like machinery, always regular, prosperous, and unfailing—besides this, and two or three constant stewardships, and a perpetual series of arbitrations, in which, such was the influence of his acuteness, his temper, and his sturdy justice, that he was often named by both parties, and left to decide alone—in addition to both these occupations he was a sort of standing overseer and churchwarden; he ruled his own hamlet like a despotic monarch, and took a prime minister's share in the government of the large parish to which it was attached; and, one of the gentlemen whose estates he managed being the independent member of an independent borough, he had every now and then a contested election on his shoulders. Even that did not discompose him. He had always leisure to receive his friends at home, or to visit them abroad; to take journeys to London, or to make excursions to the seaside; was as punctual in his pleasure as his business, and thought being happy and making happy as much the purpose of his life as getting rich. . . .

His wife was like her husband, with a difference, as they say in heraldry. Like him in looks, only thinner and paler; like him in voice and phrase, only not so loud; like him in merriment and good-humour; like him in her talent for

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welcoming and making happy, and being kind; like him in cherishing an abundance of pets, and in getting through, with marvellous facility an astounding quantity of business and pleasure. Perhaps the quality in which they resembled each other most completely was the happy ease and serenity of behaviour, so seldom found amongst people of the middle rank, who have usually a best manner, and a worst, and whose best (that is the studied, the company manner) is so very much the worst. She was frankness itself; entirely free from prickly defiance or bristling self-love. She never took offence nor gave it; never thought of herself or what others would think of her; had never been afflicted with the besetting sins of her station, a dread of the vulgar, or an aspiration of the genteel. Those 'words of fear' had never disturbed her delightful heartiness.

Her pets were her cows, her poultry, her bees and her flowers; chiefly her poultry, almost as numerous as her bees, and as various as the flowers. The farmyard swarmed with peacocks, turkeys, geese, tame and wild ducks, fowls, guineahens, and pigeons; besides a brood or two of favourite bantams in the green court before the door, with a little ridiculous strutter of a cock at their head, who imitated the magnificent demeanour of the great Tom of the barn-yard, just as Tom in his turn copied the fierce bearing of that warlike and terrible biped, the he-turkey. I am the least in the world afraid of a turkey-cock, and used to steer clear of the turkery as often as I could. Commend me to the peaceful vanity of that jewel of a bird, the peacock, sweeping his gorgeous tail along the grass, or dropping it gracefully from some low-boughed tree, whilst he turns round his crested head with the air of a birthday belle, to see who admires him. What a glorious creature it is! How thoroughly content with himself and with all the world.

Next to her poultry our good farmer's wife loved her flower-garden; and, indeed, it was of the very first water,

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the only thing about the place that was fine. She was a real, genuine florist; valued pinks, tulips, and auriculas, for certain qualities of shape and colour, with which beauty has nothing to do; preferred black ranunculus, and gave in to all those obliquities of a triple-refined taste by which the professed florist contrives to keep pace with the vagaries of a Bibliomaniac. Of all odd fashions, that of dark, gloomy, dingy flowers, appears to me the oddest. Your true connoisseurs shall now prefer a deep puce hollyhock to the gay pink blossoms which cluster round the splendid plant like a pyramid of roses. So did she. The nomenclature of the garden was still more distressing. One is never thoroughly sociable with flowers till they are naturalised, as it were, christened, provided with decent, homely, well-wearing English names. Now her plants had all sorts of heathenish appellations, which—no offence to her learning—always sounded wrong. I liked the bee's garden best; the plot of ground immediately round their hives, filled with common flowers for their use, and literally ‘redolent of sweets’! Bees are insects of great taste in every way, and seem to select as much for beauty as for flavour. They have a better eye for colour than the florist. The butterfly is also a dilettante. Rover though he be, he generally prefers the blossoms that become him best. What a pretty picture it is, on a sunshiny autumn day, to see a bright spotted butterfly, made up of gold and purple, and splendid brown, swinging on the rich flower of the china aster.

To come back to our farm. Within doors everything went as well as without. There were no fine misses sitting before the piano, and mixing the alloy of their new-fangled tinsel with the old sterling metal; nothing but an only son, excellently brought up, a fair, slim youth, whose extraordinary and somewhat pensive elegance was thrown into fine relief by his father's loud hilarity, and harmonised delightfully with the smiling kindness of his mother. His

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Spensers and Thomsons too, looked well among the hyacinths and geraniums that filled the windows of the little snug room where they usually sat; a sort of after-thought, built at an angle from the house, and looking into the farmyard. It was closely packed with favourite armchairs, favourite sofas, favourite tables, and a side-board decorated with the prize-cups and collars of the greyhounds, and generally loaded with substantial work-baskets, jars of flowers, great pyramids of home-made cakes, and sparkling bottles of gooseberry wine, famous all over the country. The walls were covered with portraits of half a dozen greyhounds, a brace of spaniels as large as life, an old pony, and the master and mistress of the house in half-length. She as unlike as possible, prim, mincing, delicate, in lace and satin; he so staringly and ridiculously like, that, when the picture fixed its good-humoured eyes on you as you entered the room, you were almost tempted to say—"How d'ye do!"—Alas! the portraits are now gone, and the originals. The garden has lost its smiling mistress; the greyhounds their kind master; and new people, new manners, and new cares, have taken possession of the old abode of peace and plenty—the great farmhouse.

From "Our Village"

A YEOMAN FARMER

E. C. GASKELL

WOODLEY stood among fields; and there was an old-fashioned garden where roses and currant-bushes touched each other, and where the feathery asparagus formed a pretty background to the pinks and gilly-flowers; there was no drive up to the door. We got out at a little gate, and walked up a straight box-edged path.... Just then Mr Holbrook appeared at the door, rubbing his hands in very effervescence

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of hospitality. He looked more like my idea of Don Quixote than ever, and yet the likeness was only external. His respectable housekeeper stood modestly at the door to bid us welcome; and, while she led the elder ladies upstairs to a bed-room, I begged to look about the garden. My request evidently pleased the old gentleman, who took me all round the place, and showed me his six-and-twenty cows, named after the different letters of the alphabet. As we went along he surprised me occasionally by repeating apt and beautiful quotations from the poets, ranging easily from Shakespeare and George Herbert to those of our own day. He did this as naturally as if he were thinking aloud, and their true and beautiful words were the best expression he could find for what he was thinking or feeling. To be sure, he called Byron "my Lord Býrron," and pronounced the name of Goethe strictly in accordance with the English sound of the letters. . . .

When he and I went in, we found that dinner was nearly ready in the kitchen—for so I suppose the room ought to be called, as there were oak dressers and cupboards all round, all over by the side of the fire-place, and only a small Turkey carpet in the middle of the flag-floor. The room might have been easily made into a handsome dark-oak dining-parlour, by removing the oven and a few other appurtenances of a kitchen, which were evidently never used, the real cooking-place being at some distance. The room in which we were expected to sit was a stiffly furnished ugly apartment; but that in which we did sit was what Mr Holbrook called the counting-house, where he paid the labourers their weekly wages at a great desk near the door. The rest of the pretty sitting-room—looking into the orchard, and all covered over with dancing tree-shadows—was filled with books. They lay on the ground, they covered the walls, they strewed the table. He was evidently half ashamed and half proud of his extravagance in this respect. They were of all

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kinds—poetry and wild weird tales prevailing. He evidently chose his books in accordance with his own tastes, not because such and such were classical or established favourites.

"Ah!" he said, "we farmers ought not to have much time for reading; yet somehow one can't help it." . . .

We had pudding before meat; and I thought Mr Holbrook was going to make some apology for his old-fashioned ways, for he began:

"I don't know whether you like new-fangled ways."

"Oh, not at all!" said Miss Matty.

"No more do I," said he. "My housekeeper *will* have these in her new fashion; or else I tell her that when I was a young man, we used to keep strictly to my father's rule, 'No broth, no ball; no ball, no beef'; and always began dinner with broth. Then we had suet puddings boiled in the broth with the beef; and then the meat itself. If we did not sup our broth, we had no ball, which we liked a deal better; and the beef came last of all, and only those had it who had done justice to the broth and the ball. Now folks begin with sweet things and turn their dinners topsy-turvy."

When the ducks and green peas came, we looked at each other in dismay; we had only two-pronged black-handled forks. It is true the steel was as bright as silver; but what were we to do? Miss Matty picked up her peas one by one, on the point of the prongs, much as Amine ate her grains of rice after her previous feast with the Ghoul. Miss Pole sighed over her delicate young peas as she left them on one side of her plate untasted, for they *would* drop between the prongs. I looked at my host: the peas were going wholesale into his capacious mouth, shovelled up by his large, round-ended knife. I saw, I imitated, I survived! My friends, in spite of my precedent, could not muster up courage enough to do an ungenteel thing; and, if Mr Holbrook had not been so heartily hungry, he would probably have seen that the good peas went away almost untouched.

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After dinner, a clay pipe was brought in, and a spittoon; and, asking us to retire to another room, where he would soon join us, if we disliked tobacco-smoke, he presented his pipe to Miss Matty, and requested her to fill the bowl. This was a compliment to a lady in his youth; but it was rather inappropriate to propose it as an honour to Miss Matty, who had been trained by her sister to hold smoking of every kind in utter abhorrence. But if it was a shock to her refinement, it was also a gratification to her feelings to be thus selected; so she daintily stuffed the strong tobacco into the pipe, and then we withdrew.

"It is very pleasant dining with a bachelor," said Miss Matty softly, as we settled ourselves in the counting-house. "I only hope it is not improper; so many pleasant things are!"

"What a number of books he has!" said Miss Pole, looking round the room. "And how dusty they are!"

"I think it must be like one of the great Dr Johnson's rooms," said Miss Matty. "What a superior man your cousin must be!"

"Yes!" said Miss Pole, "he's a great reader; but I am afraid he has got uncouth habits with living alone."

"Oh! uncouth is too hard a word. I should call him eccentric; very clever people always are!" replied Miss Matty.

When Mr Holbrook returned, he proposed a walk in the fields; but the two elder ladies were afraid of damp and dirt, and had only very unbecoming calashes to put on over their caps; so they declined, and I was again his companion in a turn which he said he was obliged to take to see his men. He strode along, either wholly forgetting my existence, or soothed into silence by his pipe—and yet it was not silence exactly. He walked before me, with a stooping gait, his hands clasped behind him; and, as some tree or cloud, or glimpse of distant upland pastures, struck him, he quoted poetry to himself, saying it out loud in a grand sonorous

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voice, with just the emphasis that true feeling and appreciation give. We came upon an old cedar-tree, which stood at one end of the house;

"The cedar spreads his dark-green layers of shade.

"Capital term—'layers'! Wonderful man!" I did not know whether he was speaking to me or not; but I put in an assenting "wonderful," although I knew nothing about it, just because I was tired of being forgotten, and of being consequently silent.

He turned sharp round. "Ay! you may say 'wonderful.' Why, when I saw the review of his poems in *Blackwood*, I set off within an hour, and walked seven miles to Misselton (for the horses were not in the way) and ordered them. Now, what colour are ash-buds in March?"

Is the man going mad? thought I. He is very like Don Quixote.

"What colour are they, I say?" repeated he vehemently.

"I am sure I don't know, sir," said I, with the meekness of ignorance.

"I knew you didn't. No more did I—an old fool that I am!—till this young man comes and tells me. Black as ash-buds in March. And I've lived all my life in the country; more shame for me not to know. Black: they are jet-black, madam." And he went off again, swinging along to the music of some rhyme he had got hold of.

When we came back, nothing would serve him, but he must read us the poems he had been speaking of; and Miss Pole encouraged him in his proposal, I thought, because she wished to hear his beautiful reading, of which she had boasted; but she afterwards said it was because she had got to a difficult part of her crochet, and wanted to count the stitches without having to talk. Whatever he had proposed would have been right to Miss Matty; although she did fall sound asleep within five minutes after he had begun a long

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poem, called *Locksley Hall*, and had a comfortable nap, unobserved, till he ended; when the cessation of his voice woke her up, and she said, feeling that something was expected, and that Miss Pole was counting:

"What a pretty book!"

"Pretty, madam, it's beautiful! Pretty, indeed!"

"Oh yes! I meant beautiful!" said she, fluttered at his disapproval of her word. "It is so like that beautiful poem of Dr Johnson's my sister used to read—I forget the name of it; what was it, my dear?" turning to me.

"Which do you mean, ma'am? What was it about?"

"I don't remember what it was about, and I've quite forgotten what the name of it was; but it was written by Dr Johnson, and was very beautiful, and very like what Mr Holbrook has just been reading."

"I don't remember it," said he, reflectively. "But I don't know Dr Johnson's poems well. I must read them."

As we were getting into the fly to return, I heard Mr Holbrook say that he should call on the ladies soon, and inquire how they got home; and this evidently pleased and fluttered Miss Matty at the time he said it; but after we had lost sight of the old house among the trees her sentiments towards the master of it were gradually absorbed in a distressing wonder as to whether Martha had broken her word and seized on the opportunity of her mistress's absence to have a 'follower.'

From "Cranford"

THE HALL FARM

GEORGE ELIOT

IT was once the Hall; it is now the Hall Farm. Like the life in some coast-town that was once a watering-place, and is now a port, where the genteel streets are silent and grass-

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grown, and the docks and warehouses busy and resonant, the life at the Hall has changed its focus, and no longer radiates from the parlour, but from the kitchen and the farmyard.

Plenty of life there! though this is the drowsiest time of the year, just before hay-harvest; and it is the drowsiest time of the day too, for it is close upon three by the sun, and it is half-past three by Mrs Poyser's handsome eight-day clock. But there is always a stronger sense of life when the sun is brilliant after rain; and now he is pouring down his beams, and making sparkles among the wet straw, and lighting up every patch of green moss on the red tiles of the cowshed, and turning even the muddy water that is hurrying along the channel to the drain into a mirror for the yellow-billed ducks, who are seizing the opportunity of getting a drink with as much body in it as possible. There is quite a concert of noises: the great bull-dog, chained against the stables, is thrown into furious exasperation by the unwary approach of a cock too near the mouth of his kennel, and sends forth a thundering bark, which is answered by two fox-hounds shut up in the opposite cow-house; the old top-knotted hens, scratching with their chicks among the straw, set up a sympathetic croaking as the discomfited cock joins them; a sow with her brood, all very muddy as to the legs and curled as to the tail, throws in some deep staccato notes; our friends the calves are bleating from the home croft; and under all, a fine ear discerns the continuous hum of human voices.

For the great barn-doors are thrown wide open, and men are busy there mending the harness, under the superintendence of Mr Goby the 'whittaw,' otherwise saddler, who entertains them with the latest Treddleston gossip. It is certainly rather an unfortunate day that Alick the shepherd has chosen for having the whittaws, since the morning turned out so wet; and Mrs Poyser has spoken her mind pretty strongly as to the dirt which the extra number of men's shoes

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brought into the house at dinner-time. Indeed, she has not yet recovered her equanimity on the subject, though it is now nearly three hours since dinner and the house-floor is perfectly clean again—as clean as everything else in that wonderful house-place, where the only chance of collecting a few grains of dust would be to climb on the salt-coffer, and put your finger on the high mantelshelf, on which the glittering brass candlesticks are enjoying their summer sinecure; for at this time of the year, of course, every one goes to bed while it is yet light, or at least light enough to discern the outlines of objects after you have bruised your shins against them. Surely nowhere else could an oak clock-case and an oak table have got to such a polish by the hand: genuine “elbow polish,” as Mrs Poyser called it, for she thanked God she never had any of your varnished rubbish in her house. Hetty Sorrel often took the opportunity, when her aunt’s back was turned, of looking at the pleasing reflection of herself in those polished surfaces, for the oak table was usually turned up like a screen, and was more for ornament than for use; and she could see herself sometimes in the great round pewter dishes that were ranged on the shelves above the long deal dinner-table, or in the hobs of the grate that always shone like jasper.

Everything was looking at its brightest at this moment, for the sun shone right on the pewter dishes, and from their reflecting surfaces pleasant jets of light were thrown on mellow oak and bright brass. . . . No scene could have been more peaceful, if Mrs Poyser, who was ironing a few things that still remained from the Monday’s wash, had not been making a frequent clinking with her iron, and moving to and fro whenever she wanted it to cool, carrying the keen glance of her blue-grey eye from the kitchen to the dairy, where Hetty was making up the butter, and from the dairy to the back-kitchen, where Nancy was taking the pies out of the oven. Do not suppose, however, that Mrs Poyser was

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elderly or shrewish in her appearance; she was a good-looking woman, not more than eight-and-thirty, of fair complexion and sandy hair, well-shapen, light-footed: the most conspicuous article in her attire was an ample chequered linen apron, which almost covered her skirt; and nothing could be plainer or less noticeable than her cap and gown, for there was no weakness of which she was less tolerant than feminine vanity, and the preference of ornament to utility. The family likeness between her and her niece Dinah Morris, with the contrast between her keenness and Dinah's seraphic gentleness of expression, might have served a painter as an excellent suggestion for a *Martha* and *Mary*. Their eyes were just of the same colour, but a striking test of the difference in their operation was seen in the demeanour of Trip, the black-and-tan terrier, whenever that much-suspected dog unwarily exposed himself to the freezing arctic ray of Mrs Poyser's glance. Her tongue was not less keen than her eye, and, whenever a damsel came within earshot, seemed to take up an unfinished lecture, as a barrel-organ takes up a tune, precisely at the point where it left off.

The fact that it was churning-day was another reason why it was inconvenient to have the 'whittaws,' and why, consequently, Mrs Poyser should scold Molly the housemaid with unusual severity. To all appearance Molly had got through her after-dinner work in an exemplary manner, had 'cleaned herself' with great dispatch, and now came to ask, submissively, if she should sit down to her spinning till milking-time. But this blameless conduct, according to Mrs Poyser, shrouded a secret indulgence of unbecoming wishes, which she now dragged forth and held up to Molly's view with cutting eloquence.

"Spinning, indeed! It isn't spinning as you'd be at, I'll be bound, and let you have your own way. I never knew your equals for gallowsness. To think of a gell o' your age wanting to go and sit with half a dozen men! I'd ha' been

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ashamed to let the words pass over my lips if I'd been you. And you, as have been here ever since last Michaelmas, and I hired you at Treddles' on statts, without a bit o' character—as I say, you might be grateful to be hired in that way to a respectable place; and you knew no more o' what belongs to work when you come here than the mawkin i' the field. As poor a two-fisted thing as ever I saw, you know you was. Who taught you to scrub a floor, I should like to know? Why, you'd leave the dirt in heaps i' the corners—anybody 'ud think you'd never been brought up among Christians. And as for spinning, why, you've wasted as much as your wage i' the flax you've spoiled in learning to spin. And you've a right to feel that, and not to go about as gaping and as thoughtless as if you was beholding to nobody. Comb the wool for the whittaws, indeed! That's what you'd like to be doing, is it? That's the way with you—that's the road you'd all like to go, headlongs to ruin. You're never easy till you've got some sweetheart as is as big a fool as yourself: you think you'll be finely off when you're married, I dare say, and have got a three-legged stool to sit on, and never a blanket to cover you, and a bit o' oat-cake for your dinner, as three children are a-snatching at."

"I'm sure I donna want t' go wi' the whittaws," said Molly, whimpering, and quite overcome by this Dantean picture of her future, "on'y we allays used to comb the wool for'n at Mester Ottley's; an' so I just axed ye. I donna want to set eyes on the whittaws again; I wish I may never stir if I do."

"Mr Ottley's, indeed! It's fine talking o' what you did at Mr Ottley's. Your missis there might like her floors dirtied with whittaws for what I know. There's no knowing what folk *wonna* like—such ways as I've heard of! I never had a girl come into my house as seemed to know what cleaning was; I think people live like pigs for my part. And as to that Betty as was dairy maid at T'ent's before

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she came to me, she'd ha' left the cheeses without turning from week's end to week's end, and the dairy thralls, I might ha' wrote my name on 'em when I come downstairs after my illness as the doctor said it was inflammation—it was a mercy I got well of it. And to think o' your knowing no better, Molly, and been here a'going i' nine months, and not for want of talking to neither—and what are you standing there for, like a jack as is run down, istead o' getting your wheel out? You're a rare one for sitting down to your work a little while after it's time to put by."

"Munny, my iron's twite told; please put it down to warm."

The small chirruping voice that uttered this request came from a little sunny-haired girl between three and four, who, seated on a high chair at the end of the ironing-table, was arduously clutching the handle of a miniature iron with her tiny fat fist, and ironing rags with an assiduity that required her to put her little red tongue out as far as anatomy would allow.

"Cold, is it, my darling? Bless your sweet face!" said Mrs Poyser, who was remarkable for the facility with which she could relapse from her official objurgatory tone to one of fondness or of friendly converse. "Never mind! Mother's done her ironing now. She's going to put the ironing things away."

"Munny, I tould 'ike to do into de barn to Tommy, to see de whittawd."

"No, no, no; Totty 'ud get her feet wet," said Mrs Poyser, carrying away her iron. "Run into the dairy and see cousin Hetty make the butter."

"I tould 'ike a bit o' pum-take," rejoined Totty, who seemed to be provided with several relays of requests; at the same time taking advantage of her momentary leisure to put her fingers into a bowl of starch and drag it down, so as to empty the contents with tolerable completeness on to the ironing sheet.

THE HALL FARM

"Did ever anybody see the like?" screamed Mrs Poyser, running towards the table where her eye had fallen on the blue stream. "The child's allays i' mischief if your back's turned a minute. What shall I do to you, you naughty, naughty gell?"

Totty however had descended from the chair with great swiftness, and was already in retreat towards the dairy with a sort of waddling run, and an amount of fat on the nape of her neck which made her look like the metamorphosis of a white sucking pig.

The starch having been wiped up by Molly's help, and the ironing apparatus put by, Mrs Poyser took up the knitting, which always lay ready at hand, and was the work she liked best, because she could carry it on automatically as she walked to and fro.

From "Adam Bede"

THE CLERGY

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JANE AUSTEN

H E was a tall heavy-looking young man of five-and-twenty. His air was grave and stately, and his manners were very formal. He had not been long seated before he complimented Mrs Bennet on having so fine a family of daughters; said he had heard much of their beauty, but that in this instance fame had fallen short of the truth; and added, that he did not doubt her seeing them all in due time well disposed of in marriage. This gallantry was not much to the taste of some of his hearers; but Mrs Bennet, who quarrelled with no compliments, answered most readily. . . . During dinner, Mr Bennet scarcely spoke at all; but when the servants were withdrawn, he thought it time to have some conversation with his guest, and therefore started a subject in which he expected him to shine, by observing that he seemed very fortunate in his patroness. Lady Catherine de Bourgh's attention to his wishes, and consideration for his comfort, appeared very remarkable. Mr Bennet could not have chosen better. Mr Collins was eloquent in her praise. The subject elevated him to more than usual solemnity of manner, and, with a most important aspect, he protested that "he had never in his life witnessed such behaviour in a person of rank—such affability and condescension as he had himself experienced from Lady Catherine. She had been graciously pleased to approve of both the discourses which he had already had the honour of preaching before her. She had also asked him twice to dine at Rosings, and had sent for him, only the Saturday before, to make up her pool for quadrille in the

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evening. Lady Catherine was reckoned proud by many people he knew, but *he* had never seen anything but affability in her. She had always spoken to him as she would to any other gentleman; she made not the smallest objection to his joining in the society of the neighbourhood nor to his leaving his parish occasionally for a week or two, to visit his relations. She had even condescended to advise him to marry as soon as he could, provided he chose with discretion; and had once paid him a visit in his humble parsonage, where she had perfectly approved all the alterations he had been making and had even vouchsafed to suggest some herself—some shelves in the closets upstairs.” . . .

Mr Bennet's expectations were fully answered. His cousin was as absurd as he had hoped, and he listened to him with the keenest enjoyment, maintaining at the same time the most resolute composure of countenance, and except in an occasional glance at Elizabeth requiring no partner in his pleasure.

By tea-time, however, the dose had been enough, and Mr Bennet was glad to take his guest into the drawing-room again, and when tea was over, glad to invite him to read aloud to the ladies. Mr Collins readily assented, and a book was produced; but on beholding it (for everything announced it to be from a circulating library), he started back, and begging pardon, protested that he never read novels. Kitty stared at him, and Lydia exclaimed. Other books were produced, and after some deliberation he chose Fordyce's *Sermons*. Lydia gaped as he opened the volume, and before he had, with very monotonous solemnity, read three pages, she interrupted him with:

“Do you know, mamma, that my uncle Philips talks of turning away Richard; and if he does, Colonel Forster will hire him. My aunt told me so herself on Saturday. I shall walk to Meryton to-morrow to hear more about it, and to ask when Mr Denny comes back from town.”

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Lydia was bid by her two eldest sisters to hold her tongue; but Mr Collins, much offended, laid aside his book, and said:

"I have often observed how little young ladies are interested by books of a serious stamp, though written solely for their benefit. It amazes me, I confess; for, certainly, there can be nothing so advantageous to them as instruction. But I will no longer importune my young cousin." . . .

The next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner, with all the observances, which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words: "May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honour of a private audience with her in the course of the morning?"

. . . Mrs Bennet and Kitty walked off, and as soon as they were gone Mr Collins began.

"Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there *not* been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house, I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it would be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did."

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The idea of Mr Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing, that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further, and he continued:

" My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced that it will add very greatly to my happiness; and, thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier—that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool, that she said ' Mr Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman for *my* sake; and for your *own* let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.' Allow me by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favour of matrimony; it remains to be told why my views were directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighbourhood, where, I assure you, there are many amiable young women. But the fact is that, being, as I am, to inherit the estate after the death of your honoured father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy

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myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place—which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you in the most animated language of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with and that one thousand pounds in the 4 per cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married."

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

"You are too hasty, sir," she cried. "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honour of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them."

"I am not now to learn," replied Mr Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, "that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favour; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long."

"Upon my word, sir," cried Elizabeth, "your hope is rather an extraordinary one after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly

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serious in my refusal. You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation."

"Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so," said Mr Collins very gravely—"but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disapprove of you. And you may be certain when I have the honour of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications."

"Indeed, Mr Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and, by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled." And rising as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room, had not Mr Collins thus addressed her.

"When I do myself the honour of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favourable answer than you have now given me; though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character."

"Really, Mr Collins," cried Elizabeth, with some warmth, "you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one."

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"You must give me leave, my dear cousin, to flatter myself that your refusal of my addresses is merely words of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these: It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy of your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of de Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favour; and you should take into further consideration that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small, that it will, in all likelihood, undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females."

"I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honour you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female, intending to plague you, but as a rational creature, speaking the truth from her heart."

"You are uniformly charming!" cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; "and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable."

To such perseverance in wilful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew; determined, that if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner

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as must be decisive, and whose behaviour at least could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

From "Pride and Prejudice"

THE MARCH OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS CHARLOTTE BRONTE

MR HELSTONE produced his watch. "Ten minutes to two," he announced aloud. "Time for all to fall into line. Come." He seized his shovel-hat and marched away. All rose and followed *en masse*.

The twelve hundred children were drawn up in three bodies of four hundred souls each; in the rear of each regiment was stationed a band; between every twenty there was an interval, wherein Helstone posted the teachers in pairs. To the van of the armies he summoned:

"Grace Boulby and Mary Sykes lead out Whinbury."

"Margaret Hall and Mary Ann Ainley conduct Nunnely."

"Caroline Helstone and Shirley Keeldar head Briarfield."

Then again he gave command:

"Mr Donne to Whinbury; Mr Sweeting to Nunnely; Mr Malone to Briarfield."

And these gentlemen stepped up before the lady-generals.

The rectors passed to the full front; the parish clerks fell to the extreme rear. Helstone lifted his shovel-hat. On an instant out clashed the eight bells in the tower, loud swelled the sounding bands, flute spoke and clarion answered, deep rolled the drums, and away they marched.

Not on combat bent, nor of foemen in search, was this priest-led and woman-officered company; yet their music played martial tunes, and, to judge by the eyes and carriage of some—Miss Keeldar for instance—these sounds awoke, if

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not a martial, yet a longing spirit. Old Helstone, turning by chance, looked into her face; and he laughed, and she laughed at him.

"There is no battle in prospect," he said; "our country does not want us to fight for it. No foe or tyrant is questioning or threatening our liberty. There is nothing to be done. We are only taking a walk. Keep your hand on the reins, captain, and slack the fire of that spirit. It is not wanted, the more's the pity."

"Take your own advice, doctor," was Shirley's response. . . .

"We shall pass through Royd Lane, to reach Nunnely Common by a short cut," said Mr Helstone.

And into the straits of Royd Lane, they accordingly defiled. It was very narrow—so narrow that only two could walk abreast without falling into the ditch which ran along each side. They had gained the middle of it, when excitement became obvious in the clerical commanders. Boulby's spectacles and Helstone's Rehoboam were agitated; the curates nudged each other; Mr Hall turned to the ladies and smiled.

"What is the matter?" was the demand.

He pointed with his staff to the end of the lane before them. Lo and behold! another, an opposition procession was there entering, headed also by men in black, and followed, as they could now hear, by music.

"Is it our double?" asked Shirley, "our manifold wraith? Here is a card turned up."

"If you wanted a battle, you are likely to get one—at least of looks," whispered Caroline, laughing.

"They shall not pass us!" cried the curates unanimously; "we'll not give way!"

"Give way!" retorted Helstone sternly, turning round; "who talks of giving way? You, boys, mind what you are about. The ladies I know will be firm. I can trust them.

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There is not a churchwoman here but will stand her ground against these folks, for the honour of the Establishment.—What does Miss Keeldar say?"

"She asks what is it."

"The Dissenting and Methodist schools, the Baptists, Independents, and Wesleyans, joined in unholy alliance, and turning purposely into this lane with the intention of obstructing our march and driving us back."

"Bad manners!" said Shirley, "and I hate bad manners. Of course they must have a lesson."

"A lesson in politeness," suggested Mr Hall, who was ever for peace, "not an example of rudeness."

Old Helstone moved on. Quickening his pace, he marched some yards in advance of his company. He had nearly reached the other sable leaders, when he who appeared to act as the hostile commander-in-chief—a large greasy man, with black hair combed flat on his forehead—called a halt. He drew forth a hymn-book, gave out a verse, set a tune, and they all struck up the most dolorous of canticles.

Helstone signed to his bands. They clashed out with all the power of brass. He desired them to play *Rule Britannia!* and ordered the children to join in vocally, which they did with enthusiastic spirit. The enemy was sung and stormed down, his psalm quelled. As far as noise went, he was conquered.

"Now, follow me!" exclaimed Helstone; "not at a run, but at a firm smart pace. Be steady, every child and woman of you. Keep together. Hold on by each other's skirts if necessary."

And he strode on with such a determined and deliberate gait, and was, besides, so well seconded by his scholars and teachers, who did exactly as he told them, neither running nor faltering, but marching with cool, solid impetus—the curates too being compelled to do the same, as they were between two fires, Helstone and Miss Keeldar, both of whom

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servants of the neighbourhood, together with the clerks', the singers', and the musicians' wives, had been pressed into the service of the day as waiters. Each vied with the other in smartness and daintiness of dress, and many handsome forms were seen among the younger ones. About half a score were cutting bread-and-butter, another half-score supplying hot water, brought from the coppers of the rector's kitchen. The profusion of flowers and evergreens, decorating the white walls, the show of silver teapots and bright porcelain on the tables, the active figures, blithe faces, gay dresses flitting about everywhere, formed altogether a refreshing and lively spectacle. Everybody talked, not very loudly, but merrily, and the canary-birds sung shrill in their high-hung cages.

Caroline as the rector's niece, took her place at one of the three first tables; Mrs Boulby and Margaret Hall officiated at the others. At these tables the *élite* of the company were to be entertained, strict rules of equality not being more the fashion at Briarfield than elsewhere. Miss Helstone removed her bonnet and scarf, that she might be less oppressed with the heat. Her long curls, falling on her neck, served almost in place of a veil, and for the rest, her muslin dress was fashioned modestly as a nun's robe, enabling her thus to dispense with the encumbrance of a shawl.

The room was filling. Mr Hall had taken his post beside Caroline; as she rearranged the cups and spoons before her, she whispered to him in a low voice remarks on the events of the day. He looked a little grave about what had taken place in Royd Lane, and she tried to smile him out of his seriousness. . . .

Caroline now looked round for Shirley. She saw the rainbow scarf and purple dress in the centre of a throng of ladies, all well known to herself, but all of the order whom she systematically avoided whenever avoidance was possible. Shyer at some moments than at others, she felt just now no courage at all to join this company. She could not, however,

HOGGLESTOCK PARSONAGE

tioned—would not admit of a gentleman with his wife and four children living with the ordinary comforts of an artisan's family. As regards the mere eating and drinking, the amounts of butcher's meat and tea and butter, they of course were used in quantities which any artisan would have regarded as compatible only with demi-starvation. Better clothing for her children was necessary, and better clothing for him. As for her own raiment, the wives of few artisans would have been content to put up with Mrs Crawley's best gown. The stuff of which it was made had been paid for by her mother when she with much difficulty bestowed upon her daughter her modest wedding trousseau. . . .

The realities of life had become so stern to her that the outward aspects of them were as nothing. She would have liked a new gown because it would have been useful; but it would have been nothing to her if all the county knew that the one in which she went to church had been turned three times; it galled him, however, to think that he and his were so poorly dressed. "I am afraid that you can hardly find a chair, Miss Robarts," said Mr Crawley.

"Oh, yes, there is nothing here but this young gentleman's library," said Lucy, moving a pile of ragged, coverless books on to the table. "I hope he'll forgive me for moving them."

"They are not Bob's,—at least not the most of them,—but mine," said the girl.

"But some of them are mine," said the boy, "ain't they, Grace?"

"And are you a great scholar?" said Lucy, drawing the child to her.

"I don't know," said Grace, with a sheepish face. "I am in Greek Delectus and the irregular verbs."

"Greek Delectus, and the irregular verbs!" And Lucy held up her hands with astonishment.

"And she knows an ode of Horace, all by heart," said Bob.

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"An ode of Horace!" said Lucy, still holding the young shamefaced female prodigy close to her knees.

"It's all I can give them," said Mr Crawley, apologetically. "A little scholarship is all the fortune that has come in my way, and I endeavour to share that with my children."

"I believe men say that it is the best fortune any of us can have," said Lucy, thinking, however, in her own mind, that Horace and the irregular Greek verbs savoured too much of precocious forcing in a young lady of nine years old. But, nevertheless, Grace was a pretty, simple-looking girl, and clung to her ally closely, and seemed to like being fondled. So that Lucy anxiously wished that Mr Crawley could be got rid of, and the presents produced. . . .

And then Lucy began petting the little boy, and by degrees slipped a small bag of gingerbread-nuts out of her muff into his hands. She had not the patience necessary for waiting, as had her sister-in-law. The boy took the bag, looked into it, and then looked up into her face.

"What is that, Bob?" said Mr Crawley.

"Gingerbread," faltered Bobby, feeling that a sin had been committed, though, probably, feeling also that he himself could hardly as yet be accounted as deeply guilty.

"Miss Robarts," said the father, "we are very much obliged to you; but our children are hardly used to such things."

"I am a lady with a weak mind, Mr Crawley, and always carry things of this sort about with me when I go to visit children; so you must forgive me, and allow your little boy to accept them."

"Oh, certainly. Bob, my child, give the bag to your mamma, and she will let Grace and you have them, one at a time." And then the bag in a solemn manner was carried over to their mother, who, taking it from her son's hands, laid it high on a bookcase.

"And not one now?" said Lucy Robarts, very pitifully.

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"Don't be so hard, Mr Crawley,—not upon them, but on me. May I not learn whether they are good of their kind?"

"I am sure they are very good; but I think their mamma will prefer their being put by for the present." This was very discouraging to Lucy. If one small bag of gingerbread-nuts created so great a difficulty, how was she to dispose of the pot of guava jelly and box of bonbons, which were still in her muff; or how distribute the packet of oranges with which the pony carriage was laden? And there was jelly for the sick child, and chicken broth, which was in truth another jelly; and, to tell the truth openly, there was also a joint of fresh pork and a basket of fresh eggs from the Framley Parsonage farmyard, which Mrs Robarts was to introduce, should she find herself capable of doing so; but which would certainly be cast out with utter scorn by Mr Crawley, if tendered in his immediate presence. There had also been a suggestion as to adding two or three bottles of port; but the courage of the ladies had failed them on that head, and the wine was not now added to their difficulties. Lucy found it very difficult to keep up a conversation with Mr Crawley—the more so as Mrs Robarts and Mrs Crawley presently withdrew into a bed-room, taking the two younger children with them. "How unlucky," thought Lucy, "that she has not got my muff with her." But the muff lay in her lap, ponderous with its rich enclosures. . . .

At this moment Providence sent great relief to Miss Robarts in the shape of Mrs Crawley's red-armed maid-of-all-work, who, walking up to her master, whispered into his ear that he was wanted. It was the time of the day that his attendance was always required in his parish school; and that attendance being so punctually given, those who wanted him looked for him there at this hour, and if he were absent, did not scruple to send for him. . . .

"Papa's gone now," whispered Bobby, "I saw him turn

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round the corner." He at any rate had learned his lesson—as it was natural for him to do. Some one else, too, had learned that papa was gone; for, while Bob and Grace were still counting the big lumps of sugar-candy, each employed the while, for inward solace with an inch of barley sugar, the front-door opened, and a big basket, and a bundle done up in a kitchen cloth, made a surreptitious entrance into the house, and were quietly unpacked by Mrs Robarts herself on the table in Mrs Crawley's bed-room.

"I did venture to bring them," said Fanny, with a look of shame, "for I know how a sick child occupies the whole house."

"Ah, my friend," said Mrs Crawley, taking hold of Mrs Robart's arm and looking into her face, "that sort of shame is over with me. God has tried us with want, and for my children's sake I am glad of such relief."

"But will he be angry?"

"I will manage him. Dear Mrs Robarts, you must not be surprised at him. His lot is very hard to bear. Such things are so much worse for a man than for a woman." Fanny was not quite prepared to admit this in her own heart, but she made no reply on this head. "I am sure I hope we may be of use to you," she said, "if you will only look on me as an old friend, and write to me if you want me. I hesitate to come frequently for fear that I should offend him." And then, by degrees, there was confidence between them, and the poverty-stricken wife of the perpetual curate was able to speak of the weight of her burden to the well-to-do young wife of the Barchester prebendary. "It was hard," the former said, "to feel herself so different from the wives of other clergymen around her—to know that they lived softly, while she, with all the work of her hands, and unceasing struggle of her energies, could hardly manage to place wholesome food before her husband and children. It was a terrible thing, a grievous thing to think of, that all the work of her mind

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should be given up to such subjects as these. But, nevertheless she could bear it," she said, "as long as he would carry himself like a man, and face his lot boldly before the world."

From "Framley Parsonage"

II. PLUMSTEAD EPISCOPI

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

AND now let us observe the well-furnished breakfast-parlour at Plumstead Episcopi, and the comfortable air of all the belongings of the rectory. Comfortable they certainly were, but neither gorgeous, nor even grand; indeed, considering the money that had been spent there, the eye and taste might have been better served; there was an air of heaviness about the rooms which might have been avoided without any sacrifice of propriety; colours might have been better chosen, and lights more perfectly diffused; but in so doing, perhaps the thorough clerical aspect of the whole might have been somewhat marred. At any rate, it was not without ample consideration that those thick, dark, costly carpets had been put down; those embossed, but sombre papers hung up, those heavy curtains draped so as to half exclude the light of the sun. Nor were those old-fashioned chairs, bought at a price far exceeding that now given for more modern goods, without a purpose. The breakfast service on the table was equally costly and equally plain. The apparent object had been to spend money without obtaining brilliancy or splendour. The urn was of thick and solid silver, as were also the teapot, coffee-pot, cream-ewer, and sugar-bowl; the cups were old, dim dragon china, worth about a pound apiece, but very despicable in the eyes of the uninitiated. The silver forks were so heavy as to be disagreeable to the hand, and the bread-basket was of a weight really formidable to any but

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robust persons. The tea consumed was the very best, the coffee the very blackest, the cream the very thickest; there was dry toast and buttered toast, muffins and crumpets; hot bread and cold bread, white bread and brown bread, home-made bread and baker's bread, wheaten bread and oatmeal bread; and if there be other breads than these they were there; there were eggs in napkins, and crispy bits of bacon under silver covers; and there were little fishes in a little box, and devilled kidneys sizzling on a hot-water dish; which, by the by, were placed closely contiguous to the plate of the worthy archdeacon himself. Over and above this, on a snow-white napkin, spread upon the sideboard, was a huge ham and a huge sirloin; the latter having laden the dinner-table on the previous evening. Such was the ordinary fare at Plumstead Episcopi.

From "The Warden"

SHEPPERTON FOLK DISCUSS THEIR CURATE

GEORGE ELIOT

THOSE were days when a man could hold three small livings, starve a curate apiece on two of them, and live badly himself on the third. It was so with the Vicar of Shepperton; a vicar given to bricks and mortar, and thereby running into debt, far away in a northern county—who executed his vicarial duties towards Shepperton by pocketing the sum of thirty-five pounds ten per annum, the net surplus remaining to him from the proceeds of that living after the disbursement of eighty pounds as the annual stipend of his curate. And, now pray, can you solve me the following problem? Given a man with a wife and six children; let him be obliged always to exhibit himself, when outside his own door in a suit of black broadcloth, such as will not undermine the founda-

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tions of the Establishment by a paltry plebeian glossiness or an unseemly whiteness at the edges ; in a snowy cravat, which is a serious investment of labour in the hemming, starching, and ironing departments ; and in a hat which shows no symptom of taking to the hideous doctrine of expediency, and shaping itself according to circumstances ; let him have a parish large enough to create an external necessity for abundant shoe-leather, and an internal necessity for abundant beef and mutton, as well as poor enough to require frequent priestly consolation in the shape of shillings and sixpences ; and lastly let him be compelled, by his own pride, and other people's, to dress his wife and children with gentility from bonnet-strings to shoe-strings. By what process of division can the sum of eighty pounds per annum be made to yield a quotient which will cover that man's weekly expenses ? This was the problem presented by the position of the Rev. Amos Barton, as curate of Shepperton, rather more than twenty years ago.

What was thought of this problem, and of the man who had to work it out, by some of the well-to-do inhabitants of Shepperton, two years or more after Mr Barton's arrival among them, you shall hear, if you will accompany me to Cross Farm, and to the fireside of Mrs Patten, a childless old lady, who had got rich, chiefly by the negative process of spending nothing. . . . Mr and Mrs Hackit, from the neighbouring farm, are Mrs Patten's guests this evening ; so is Mr Pilgrim, the doctor from the nearest market-town, who, though occasionally affecting aristocratic airs, and giving late dinners with enigmatic side-dishes and poisonous port, is never so comfortable as when he is relaxing his professional legs in one of those excellent farmhouses where the mice are sleek and the mistress sickly. And he is at this moment in clover.

For the flickering of Mrs Patten's bright fire is reflected in her bright copper tea-kettle, the home-made muffins glisten

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with an inviting succulence, and Mrs Patten's niece, a single lady of fifty, who has refused the most ineligible offers out of devotion to her aged aunt, is pouring the rich cream into the fragrant tea with a discreet liberality.

Reader! did you ever taste such a cup of tea as Miss Gibbs is this moment handing to Mr Pilgrim? Do you know the dulcet strength, the animating blandness of tea sufficiently blended with real farmhouse cream? No—most likely you are a miserable town-bred reader, who think of cream as a thinish white fluid, delivered in infinitesimal pennyworths down area steps; or, perhaps, from a presentment of calves' brains, you restrain from any lacted addition and rasp your tongue with unmitigated bohea. You have a vague idea of a milch cow as probably a white plaster animal standing in a butteiman's window, and you know nothing of the sweet history of genuine cream, such as Miss Gibbs's: how it was this morning in the udders of the large sleek beasts, as they stood, lowing a patient entreaty under the milking-shed; how it fell with a pleasant rhythm into Betty's pail, sending a delicious incense into the cool air; how it was carried into that temple of moist cleanliness, the dairy, where it quietly separated itself from the meaner elements of milk, and lay in mellowed whiteness ready for the skimming-dish which transferred it to Miss Gibbs's cream jug. If I am right in my conjecture, you are unacquainted with the highest possibilities of tea; and Mr Pilgrim, who is holding that cup in his hand, has an idea beyond you.

Mrs Hackit declines cream; she has so long abstained from it with an eye to the weekly butter-money, that abstinence, wedded to habit, has begotten aversion. . . .

Mrs Patten . . . is a pretty little old woman of eighty with a close cap and tiny flat white curls round her face, as natty and unsmeared and invariable as the waxen image of a little old lady under a glass-case; once a lady's maid, and wedded for her beauty. She used to adore her husband, and

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now adores her money, cherishing a quiet blood-relation's hatred for her niece Janet Gibbs, who, as she knows, expects a large legacy, and whom she is determined to disappoint. . . .

Mrs Patten has more respect for her neighbour Mr Hackit, than for most people. Mr Hackit is a shrewd, substantial man, whose advice about crops is always worth listening to, and who is too well off to want to borrow money.

And now that we are snug and warm with this little tea-party, while it is freezing with February bitterness outside, we will listen to what they are talking about.

"So," said Mr Pilgrim, with his mouth only half empty of muffin, "you had a row in Shepperton Church last Sunday. I was at Jem Hood's, the bassoon man's, this morning, attending his wife, and he swears he'll be revenged on the parson, a confounded methodistical, meddlesome chap, who must be putting his fingers in every pie. What was it all about?"

"Oh, a passil o' nonsense," said Mr Hackit, sticking one thumb between the buttons of his capacious waistcoat, and retaining a pinch of snuff with the other—for he was but moderately given to "the cups that cheer but not inebriate," and had already finished his tea; "they began to sing the wedding psalm for a new-married couple, as pretty a psalm an' as pretty a tune as any's in the prayer-book. It's been sung for every new-married couple since I was a boy. And what can be better?" Here Mr Hackit stretched out his left arm, threw back his head, and broke into melody:

"O what a happy thing it is,
And joyful for to see,
Brethren to dwell together in
Friendship and unity.

But Mr Barton is all for the hymns, and a sort o' music as I can't join in at all."

"And so," said Mr Pilgrim, recalling Mr Hackit from lyrical reminiscences to narrative, "he called out Silence!

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did he? when he got into the pulpit; and gave out a hymn himself to some meeting-house tune?"

"Yes," said Mrs Hackit, stooping to the candle to pick up a stitch, "and turned as red as a turkey-cock. I often say when he preaches about meekness he gives himself a slap in the face. He's like me—he's got a temper of his own."

"Rather a low-bred fellow, I think, Barton," said Mr Pilgrim, who hated the Rev. Amos for two reasons—because he had called in a new doctor, recently settled in Shepperton; and because, being himself a dabbler in drugs, he had the credit of having cured a patient of Mr Pilgrim's. "They say his father was a Dissenter shoemaker; and he's half a Dissenter himself. Why, doesn't he preach extempore in that cottage up here of a Sunday evening?"

"Tchaw!"—this was Mrs Hackit's favourite interjection—"that preaching without book's no good, only when a man has a gift, and has the Bible at his fingers' ends. It was all very well for Parry—he'd a gift; and, in my youth I've heard the Ranters out o' doors in Yorkshire go on for an hour or two on end, without ever sticking fast a minute. There was one clever chap, I remember, as used to say, 'You're like the woodpigeon; it says do, do, do, all day, and never sets about any work itself.' That's bringing it home to people. But our parson's no gift at all that way; he can preach as good a sermon as need be heard when he writes it down. But when he tries to preach wi'out book, he rambles about, and doesn't stick to's text; and every now and then he flounders about like a sheep as has cast itself and can't get on its legs again. You wouldn't like that, Mrs Patten, if you was to go to church now?"

"Eh, dear," said Mrs Patten, falling back in her chair, and lifting up her little withered hands, "what 'ud Mr Gilfil say, if he was worthy to know the changes as has come about these last ten years? I don't understand these new sort o' doctrines. When Mr Barton comes to see me,

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he talks about nothing but my sins and my need o' marcy. Now, Mr Hackit, I've never been a sinner. From the first beginning, when I went into service, I al'ys did my duty by my employers. I was a good wife as any's in the county—never aggravated my husband. The cheese factor used to say my cheese was al'ys to be depended on. I've known women, as their cheeses swelled a shame to be seen, when their husbands had counted on the cheese-money to make up their rent; and yet, they'd three gowns to my one. If I'm not to be saved, I know a many as are in a bad way. But it's well for me as I can't go to church any longer, for if th' old singers are to be done away with, there'll be nothing left as it was in Mr Patten's time; and what's more, I hear you've settled to pull the church down, and build it up new?"

Now, the fact was that the Rev. Amos Barton, on his last visit to Mrs Patten, had urged her to enlarge her promised subscription of twenty pounds, representing to her that she was only a steward of her riches, and that she could not spend them more for the glory of God than by giving a heavy subscription towards the rebuilding of Shepperton Church—a practical precept that was not likely to smooth the way towards her acceptance of his theological doctrine. Mr Hackit, who had more doctrinal enlightenment than Mrs Patten, had been a little shocked by the heathenism of her speech, and was glad of the new turn given to the subject by the question, addressed to him, as church-warden and an authority on all parochial matters.

"Ah," he answered, "the parson's boddered us into it at last, and we're to begin pulling down this spring. But we haven't got money enough yet. I was for waiting till we'd made up the sum, and, for my part, I think the congregation's fell off o' late; though Mr Barton says that's because there's been no room for the people when they've come. You see, the congregation got so large in Parry's time the

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people stood in th' aisles; but there's never any crowd now, that I can see."

"Well," said Mrs Hackit, whose good nature began to act now that it was a little in contradiction with the dominant tone of the conversation, "I like Mr Barton. I think he's a good sort o' man, for all he's not overburthened i' th' upper story; and his wife's as nice a lady-like woman as I'd wish to see. How nice she keeps her children! and little enough money to do't with; and a delicate creatur'. . . . I don't know how they make both ends meet, I'm sure, now her aunt has left 'em. But I sent 'em a cheese and a sack o' potatoes last week; that's something towards filling the little mouths."

"Ah!" said Mr Hackit, "and my wife makes Mr Barton a good stiff glass o' brandy-and-water, when he comes in to supper, after his cottage preaching. The parson likes it; it puts a bit o' colour into's face, and makes him look a deal handsomer."

This allusion to brandy-and-water suggested to Miss Gibbs the introduction of the liquor decanters, now that the tea was cleared away; for in bucolic society five-and-twenty years ago, the human animal, of the male sex, was understood to be perpetually athirst, and "something to drink" was as necessary a "condition of thought" as Time and Space.

"Now, that cottage preaching," said Mr Pilgrim, mixing himself a strong glass of 'cold without,' "I was talking about it to our Parson Ely the other day, and he doesn't approve of it at all. He said it did as much harm as good to give a too familiar aspect to religious teaching. That was what Ely said—it does as much harm as good to give a too familiar aspect to religious teaching."

Mr Pilgrim generally spoke with an intermittent kind of splutter; indeed one of his patients had observed that it was a pity such a clever man had a "'pediment' in his speech. But when he came to what he conceived the pith of his

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argument or the point of his joke, he mouthed out his words with slow emphasis; as a hen passes at irregular intervals from pianissimo semiquavers to fortissimo crotchets. He thought this speech of Mr Ely's particularly metaphysical and profound, and the more decisive of the question because it was a generality that represented no particulars to his mind.

"Well, I don't know about that," said Mrs Hackit, who had always the courage of her opinion, "but I know, some of our labourers and stockingers as used never come to church, come to the cottage, and that's better than never hearing anything good from week's end to week's end. And there's that Tract Society as Mr Barton has begun—I've seen more o' the poor people with going tracking, than all the time I've lived in the parish before. And there'd need be something done among 'em; for the drinking at them Benefit Clubs is shameful. There's hardly a steady man or steady woman either, but what's a Dissenter."

During this speech of Mrs Hackit's, Mr Pilgrim had emitted a succession of little snorts, something like the treble grunts of a guinea-pig, which were always with him the sign of suppressed disapproval. But he never contradicted Mrs Hackit—a woman whose 'pot-luck' was always to be relied upon, and who on her side had unlimited reliance on bleeding, blistering, and draughts.

Mrs Patten, however, felt equal disapprobation, and had no reasons for suppressing it.

"Well," she remarked, "I've heared of no good from interfering with one's neighbours, poor or rich. And I hate the sight o' women going about trapesing from house to house in all weathers, wet or dry, and coming in with their petticoats dagged and their shoes all over mud. Janet wanted to join in the tracking, but I told her I'd have nobody tracking out o' my house; when I'm gone, she may do as she likes. I never dagged my petticoats in *my* life, and I've no opinion o' that sort o' religion."

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"No," said Mr Hackit, who was fond of soothing the acerbities of the feminine mind with a jocose compliment, "you held your petticoats so high to show your tight ankles, it isn't everybody as likes to show her ankles." . . .

The stream of conversation had thus diverged; and no more was said about the Rev. Amos Barton, who is the main object of interest to us just now. So we may leave Cross Farm without waiting till Mrs Hackit, resolutely donning her clogs and wrappings, renders it incumbent on Mr Pilgrim also to fulfil his frequent threat of going.

From "Scenes of Clerical Life"

A RECEPTION AT BARCHESTER PALACE

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

ETHELBERT STANHOPE was dressed in light blue from head to foot. He had on the loosest possible blue coat, cut square like a shooting coat, and very short. It was lined with silk of azure blue. He had on a blue satin waistcoat, a blue neck-handkerchief which was fastened beneath his throat with a coral ring, and very loose blue trousers which almost concealed his feet. His soft glossy beard was softer and more glossy than ever.

The bishop, who had made one mistake, thought that he also was a servant, and therefore tried to make way for him to pass. But Ethelbert soon corrected the error.

"Bishop of Barchester, I presume?" said Bertie Stanhope, putting out his hand frankly; "I am delighted to make your acquaintance. We are in rather close quarters here, an't we?"

In truth they were. They had been crowded up behind the head of the sofa: the bishop in waiting to receive his guest, and the other in carrying her; and they now had hardly room to move themselves.

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The bishop gave his hand quickly, and made his little studied bow, and was delighted to make—— He couldn't go on for he did not know whether his friend was a signor, or a count, or a prince.

"My sister really puts you all to great trouble," said Bertie. "Not at all!" The bishop was delighted to have the opportunity of welcoming the Signora Vicinironi—so at least he said—and attempted to force his way round to the front of the sofa. He had, at any rate, learnt that his strange guests were brother and sister. The man, he presumed, must be Signor Vicinironi,—or count, or prince, as it might be. It was wonderful what good English he spoke. There was just a twang of foreign accent, and no more.

"Do you like Barchester, on the whole?" asked Bertie.

The bishop, looking dignified, said that he did like Barchester.

"You've not been here very long, I believe," said Bertie.

"No—not long," said the bishop, and tried again to make his way between the back of the sofa and a heavy rector, who was staring over it at the grimaces of the signora.

"You weren't a bishop before, were you?"

Dr Proudie explained that this was the first diocese he had held.

"Ah—I thought so," said Bertie; "but you are changed about sometimes, an't you?"

"Translations are occasionally made," said Dr Proudie, "but not so frequently as in former days."

"They've cut them all down to pretty nearly the same figure, haven't they?" said Bertie.

To this the bishop could not bring himself to make any answer, but again attempted to move the rector.

"But the work, I suppose, is different?" continued Bertie. "Is there much to do here, at Barchester?" This was said in exactly the tone that a young Admiralty clerk

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might use in asking the same question of a brother acolyte at the Treasury.

"The work of a bishop of the Church of England," said Dr Proudie, with considerable dignity, "is not easy. The responsibility which he has to bear is very great indeed."

"Is it?" said Bertie, opening wide his wonderful blue eyes. "Well; I never was afraid of responsibility. I once had thoughts of being a bishop myself."

"Had thoughts of being a bishop!" said Dr Proudie, much amazed.

"That is, a parson—a parson first, you know, and a bishop afterwards. If I had once begun, I'd have stuck to it. But on the whole, I like the Church of Rome best."

The bishop could not discuss this point, so he remained silent.

"Now, there's my father," continued Bertie; "he hasn't stuck to it. I fancy he didn't like saying the same thing over so often. By the bye, Bishop, have you seen my father?"

The bishop was more amazed than ever. Had he seen his father? "No," he replied; "he had not had the pleasure, he hoped he might"; and, as he said so, he resolved to bear heavy on that fat, immovable rector, if ever he had the power of doing so.

"He's in the room somewhere," said Bertie, "and he'll turn up soon. By the bye, do you know much about the Jews?"

At last the bishop saw a way out. "I beg your pardon," said he, "but I'm forced to go round the room."

"Well, I believe I'll follow in your wake," said Bertie. "Terribly hot—isn't it?" This he addressed to the fat rector with whom he had brought himself into the closest contact. "They've got this sofa into the worst possible part of the room; suppose we move it. Take care, Madeline."

The sofa had certainly been placed so that those who were behind it found great difficulty in getting out;—there was

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but a narrow gangway, which one person could stop. This was a bad arrangement, and one which Bertie thought it might be well to improve.

"Take care, Madeline," said he; and turning to the fat rector, added, "Just help me with a slight push."

The rector's weight was resting on the sofa, and unwittingly lent all its impetus to accelerate and increase the motion which Bertie intentionally originated. The sofa rushed from its moorings, and ran half-way into the middle of the room. Mrs Proudie was standing with Mr Slope in front of the signora, and had been trying to be condescending and sociable; but she was not in the very best of tempers; for she found that whenever she spoke to the lady, the lady replied by speaking to Mr Slope. Mr Slope was a favourite, no doubt; but Mrs Proudie had no idea of being less thought of than the chaplain. She was beginning to be stately, stiff, and offended when unfortunately the caster of the sofa caught itself in her lace train, and carried away there is no saying how much of her garniture. Gathers were heard to go, stitches to crack, plaits to fly open, flounces were seen to fall, and breadths to expose themselves;—a long ruin of rent lace disfigured the carpet, and still clung to the vile wheel on which the sofa moved.

So, when a granite battery is raised, excellent to the eyes of warfaring men, is its strength and symmetry admired. It is the work of years. Its neat embrasures, its finished parapets, its casemented stories, show all the skill of modern science. But anon, a small spark is applied to the treacherous fusee—a cloud of dust arises to the heavens—and then nothing is to be seen but dirt and dust and ugly fragments.

We know what was the wrath of Juno when her beauty was despised. We know to what storms of passion even celestial minds can yield. As Juno may have looked at Paris on Mount Ida, so did Mrs Proudie look on Ethelbert Stanhope when he pushed the leg of the sofa into her lace train.

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"Oh, you idiot, Bertie!" said the signora, seeing what had been done, and what were to be the consequences.

"Idiot!" re-echoed Mrs Proudie, as though the word were not half strong enough to express the required meaning; "I'll let him know——"; and then looking round to learn, at a glance, the worst, she saw that at present it behoved her to collect the scattered *débris* of her dress.

Bertie, when he saw what he had done, rushed over the sofa, and threw himself on one knee before the offended lady. His object, doubtless, was to liberate the torn lace from the caster, but he looked as though he were imploring pardon from a goddess.

"Unhand it, sir!" said Mrs Proudie. From what scrap of dramatic poetry she had extracted the word cannot be said; but it must have rested on her memory, and now seemed opportunely dignified for the occasion.

"I'll fly to the looms of the fairies to repair the damage, if you'll only forgive me," said Ethelbert, still on his knees.

"Unhand it, sir!" said Mrs Proudie, with redoubled emphasis, and all but furious wrath. This allusion to the fairies was a direct mockery, and intended to turn her into ridicule. So at least it seemed to her. "Unhand it, sir!" she almost screamed.

"It's not me; it's the cursed sofa," said Bertie, looking imploringly in her face, and holding up both his hands to show that he was not touching her belongings, but still remaining on his knees.

Hereupon the signora laughed; not loud, indeed, but yet audibly. And as the tigress bereft of her young will turn with equal anger on any within reach, so did Mrs Proudie turn on her female guest.

"Madam!" she said, and it is beyond the power of prose to tell of the fire which flashed from her eyes.

The signora stared her full in the face for a moment, and

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then, turning to her brother said, playfully, "Bertie, you idiot, get up."

By this time the bishop, and Mr Slope, and her three daughters were around her, and had collected together the wide ruins of her magnificence. The girls fell into circular rank behind their mother, and thus following her, and carrying out the fragments, they left the reception-rooms in a manner not altogether devoid of dignity. Mrs Proudie had to retire, and rearray herself.

As soon as the constellation had swept by, Ethelbert rose from his knees, and turning with mock anger to the fat rector, said, "After all, it was your doing, sir—not mine. But perhaps you are waiting for preferment, and so I bore it."

Whereupon there was a laugh against the fat rector, in which both the bishop and the chaplain joined; and thus things got themselves again into order. . . .

Dr Proudie tripped out into the adjoining room, in which were congregated a crowd of Grantlyite clergymen, among whom the archdeacon was standing pre-eminent, while the old dean was sitting half-buried in a huge chair by the fire-place. The bishop was very anxious to be gracious. . . .

"Pray don't stir, Mr Dean, pray don't stir," he said, as the old man essayed to get up; I take it as a great kindness your coming to such an omnium gatherum as this. But we have hardly got settled yet, and Mrs Proudie has not been able to see her friends as she would wish to do. Well, Mr Archdeacon, after all, we have not been so hard on you at Oxford."

"No," said the archdeacon, "you've only drawn our teeth, and cut out our tongues; you've allowed us still to breathe and swallow."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the bishop. "It's not quite so easy to cut out the tongue of an Oxford magnate,—and as for teeth,—ha, ha, ha! Why, in the way we've left the

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matter with a young man with such clothes and such a beard.

"Have you got good water out at Plumstead, Mr Archdeacon?" said the bishop, by way of changing the conversation.

"Pretty good," said Dr Grantly.

"But by no means so good as his wine, my lord," said a witty minor canon.

"Nor so generally used," said another, "that is for inward application."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the bishop, "a good cellar of wine is a very comfortable thing in a house."

"Your German professors, sir, prefer beer, I believe," said the sarcastic meagre little prebendary.

"They don't think much of either," said Ethelbert, "and that perhaps accounts for their superiority. Now, the Jewish professor——"

The insult was becoming too deep for the spirit of Oxford to endure, so the archdeacon walked off one way and the chancellor another, followed by their disciples, and the bishop and the young reformer were left together on the hearth-rug.

"I was a Jew once myself," began Bertie.

The bishop was determined not to stand another examination, or be led on any terms into Palestine; so he again remembered that he had to do something very particular, and left young Stanhope with the dean. The dean did not get the worst of it for Ethelbert gave him a true account of his remarkable doings in the Holy Land.

From "Barchester Towers"

POLITICS AND INDUSTRIALISM

A BARCHESTER ELECTION

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

THE two parties had outdone each other in the loudness of their assertions that each would on his side conduct the election in strict conformity to law. There was to be no bribery. Bribery! Who, indeed, in these days would dare to bribe; to give absolute money for an absolute vote, and to pay for such an article in *downright* palpable sovereigns? No. Purity was much too rampant for that, and the means of detection too well understood. But purity was to be carried much further than this. There should be no treating; no hiring two hundred voters to act as messengers at twenty shillings a day in looking up some four hundred other voters; no bands were to be paid for; no carriages furnished; no ribbons supplied. British voters were to vote, if vote they would, for the love and respect they bore to their chosen candidate. If so actuated they would not vote, they might stay away; no other inducement would be offered.

So much was said loudly—very loudly—by each party—but, nevertheless, Mr Moffat, early in these election days, began to have some misgivings about the bill. The proclaimed arrangement had been one suitable to his taste; for Mr Moffat loved his money. He was a man in whose breast the ambition of being great in the world, and of joining himself to aristocratic people, was constantly at war with the great cost which such tastes occasioned. His last election had not been a cheap triumph. In one way or another money had been dragged from him for purposes

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which to his mind had been unintelligible; and when, about the middle of his first session, he had with much grumbling settled all demands, he had questioned within himself whether his whistle was worth its cost.

He was therefore a great stickler for purity of election; . . . when, in those canvassing days immediately preceding the election, he had seen that all the beer-houses were open, and that half the population was drunk he had asked Mr Nearthewinde whether this violation of the treaty was taking place only on the part of his opponent, and whether, in such a case, it would not be duly noticed with a view to a possible future petition.

Mr Nearthewinde assured him that half at least of the wallowing swine were his own especial friends; and that somewhat more than half of the publicans of the town were eagerly engaged in fighting his, Mr Moffat's battle. Mr Moffat groaned and would have expostulated had Mr Nearthewinde been willing to hear him. . . .

It certainly did appear on the morning of the election as though some great change had been made in the resolution of the candidates to be very pure. From an early hour rough bands of music were to be heard in every part of the usually quiet town; carriages and gigs, omnibuses and flys, all the old carriages from all the inn-yards and every vehicle of any description which could be pressed into the service were in motion; if the horses and post-boys were not to be paid for by the candidates, the voters themselves were certainly very liberal in their mode of bringing themselves to the poll. The election district of the city of Barchester extended for some miles on each side of the city, so that the omnibuses and flys had enough to do. Beer was to be had at the public-houses almost without question, by all who chose to ask for it; and rum and brandy were dispensed to select circles within the bars with almost equal profusion. As for ribbons, the mercer's shops must have been emptied

of that article as far as scarlet and yellow were concerned. Scarlet was Sir Roger's colour, while the friends of Mr Moffat were decked with yellow. Seeing what he did see, Mr Moffat might well ask if there had not been a violation of the treaty of purity!

At the time of this election there was some question whether England should go to war with all her energy; or whether it would not be better for her to save her breath to cool her porridge, and not meddle more than could be helped with foreign quarrels. The last view of the matter was advocated by Sir Roger, and his motto of course proclaimed the merits of domestic peace and quiet. "Peace abroad and a big loaf at home," was consequently displayed on four or five huge scarlet banners, and carried waving over the heads of the people. But Mr Moffat was a staunch supporter of the Government, who were already inclined to be belligerent, and "England's honour" was therefore the legend under which he selected to do battle. It may, however, be doubted whether there was in all Barchester one inhabitant—let alone one elector—so fatuous as to suppose that England's honour was in any special manner dear to Mr Moffat; or that he would be a whit more sure of a big loaf than he was now, should Sir Roger happily become a member of the legislature.

And then the fine arts were resorted to, seeing that language fell short in telling all that was found necessary to be told. (Poor Sir Roger's failing as regards the bottle was too well known; and it was also known that in acquiring his title, he had not quite laid aside the rough mode of speech which he had used in early years.) There was, consequently, a great daub painted up on sundry walls, on which a navvy with a pimply, bloated face was to be seen standing on a railway bank, leaning on a spade holding a bottle in one hand, while he invited a comrade to drink. "Come, Jack, shall us have a drop of some'at short?" were the words coming out of

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the navvy's mouth; and under this was painted in huge letters,

THE LAST NEW BARONET

But Mr Moffat hardly escaped on easier terms. The trade by which his father had made his money was as well known as that of the railway contractor; and every possible symbol of tailordom was displayed in graphic portraiture on the walls and hoardings of the city. He was drawn with his goose, with his scissors, with his needle, with his tapes; he might be seen measuring, cutting, stitching, pressing, carrying home his bundle, and presenting his little bill; and under each of these representations was repeated his own motto, "England's honour."

Such were the pleasant little amenities with which the people of Barchester greeted the two candidates who were desirous of the honour of serving them in Parliament.

The polling went on briskly and merrily. There were somewhat about nine hundred registered voters, of whom the greater portion recorded their votes early in the day. At two o'clock, according to Sir Roger's committee, the numbers were as follows:

Scatcherd	:	:	:	:	275
Moffat	:	:	:	:	268

Whereas by the light afforded by Mr Moffat's people, they stood in a slightly different ratio to each other,

Moffat	:	:	:	:	277
Scatcherd	:	:	:	:	269

This naturally heightened the excitement, and gave additional delight to the proceedings. At half-past two it was agreed by both sides that Mr Moffat was leading; the Moffatites claiming a majority of twelve, and the Scatcherdites allowing a majority of one. But by three o'clock sundry good men and true, belonging to the railway interest, had

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made their way to the booth in spite of the efforts of a band of roughs from Courcy, and Sir Roger was again leading, by ten or a dozen according to his own showing. . . . Four o'clock was the hour for closing the poll, and that was now fast coming. Tremendous exertions had been made about half-past three, by a safe emissary sent from Nearthewinde, to prove to Mr Reddypalm that all manner of contingent advantages should accrue to the Brown Bear if it should turn out that Mr Moffat should take his seat for Barchester. No bribe was, of course, offered or even hinted at. The purity of Barchester was not contaminated during the day by one such curse as this. But a man, and a publican, would be required to do some great deed in the public line; to open some colossal tap; to draw beer for the million; and no one would be so fit as Mr Reddypalm—if only it turned out that Mr Moffat should, in the coming February, take his seat as member for Barchester.

But Mr Reddypalm was a man of humble desires, whose ambition soared no higher than this—that his little bills should be duly settled. It is wonderful what a love an inn-keeper has for his bill in its entirety. An account, with a respectable total of five or six pounds, is brought to you, and you complain but of one article; that fire in the bedroom was never lighted; or that second glass of brandy and water was never called for. You desire to have the shilling expunged, and all your host's pleasure in the whole transaction is destroyed. Oh! my friends, pay for that brandy and water, though you never drank it; suffer the fire to pass though it never warmed you. Why make a good man miserable for such a trifle?

It became notified to Reddypalm with sufficient clearness that his bill for the past election should be paid without further question; and, therefore, at five o'clock the mayor of Barchester proclaimed the results of the contest in the following figures:

THE 'BEDCHAMBER' INCIDENT

Scatcherd	:	:	:	:	378
Moffat	:	:	:	:	376

Mr Reddypalm's two votes had decided the question. . . . This much, however, had been absolutely decided before the yellow committee concluded their labour at the White Horse; there should be a petition. Mr Nearthewinde had not been asleep, and already knew something of the manner in which Mr Reddypalm's mind had been quieted.

From "Dr Thorne"

THE 'BEDCHAMBER' INCIDENT

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Two and even three days had rolled over since Mr Tadpole had reported Sir Robert on his way to the palace, and marvellously little had transpired. It was of course known that a Cabinet was in formation, and the daily papers reported to the public the diurnal visits of certain noble lords and right honourable gentlemen to the new first minister. But the world of high politics had suddenly become so cautious that nothing leaked out. Even gossip was at fault. Lord Marney had not received the Buckhounds, though he never quitted his house for ride or lounge without leaving precise instructions with Captain Grouse as to the identical time he should return home, so that his acceptance should not be delayed. Ireland was not yet governed by the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine, and the Earl de Mowbray was still ungartered. The three distinguished noblemen were all of them anxious,—a little fidgety; but at the same time it was not even whispered that Lord Rambrooke or any other lord had received the post that Lord Marney had appropriated to himself; nor had Lord Kilcroppy had a suspicious interview with the Prime Minister, which kept the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine quiet though not easy; while not a shadow of coming events had

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glanced over the vacant stall of Lord Ribbonville in St George's Chapel, and this made Lord de Mowbray tranquil, though scarcely content. In the meantime, daily and hourly, they all pumped Mr Tadpole, who did not find it difficult to keep up his reputation for discretion; for knowing nothing, and beginning himself to be perplexed at the protracted silence, he took refuge in oracular mystery, and delivered himself of certain Delphic sentences which adroitly satisfied those who consulted him while they never committed himself.

At length one morning there was an odd whisper in the circle of first initiation. The blood mantled on the cheek of Lady St Julians; Lady Deloraine turned pale. Lady Firebrace wrote confidential notes with the same pen to Mr Tadpole and Lord Masque. Lord Marney called early in the morning on the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine, and already found Lord de Mowbray there. The clubs were crowded even at noon. Everywhere a mysterious bustle and an awful stir. What could be the matter? What has happened?

"It is true," said Mr Egerton to Mr Berners at Brooks'.

"Is it true?" asked Mr Jermyn of Lord Valentine at the Carlton.

"I heard it last night at Crockford's," said Mr Ormsby; "one always hears things there four-and-twenty hours before other places."

The world was employed the whole of the morning in asking and answering this important question, "Is it true?" Towards dinner-time, it was settled universally in the affirmative, and then the world went out to dine and to ascertain why it was true and how it was true.

And now what had really happened? What had happened was what is commonly called a 'hitch.' There was undoubtedly a hitch somewhere and somehow; a hitch in the construction of the new Cabinet. Who could have thought it? The Whig ministers, it seems, had resigned, but somehow or other had not entirely and completely gone out. What a

THE 'BEDCHAMBER' INCIDENT

constitutional dilemma! The Houses must evidently meet, address the throne, and impeach its obstinate counsellors. Clearly the right course, and party feeling ran so high that it was not impossible that something might be done. At any rate it was a capital moment for the House of Lords to pluck up a little courage and take what is called in political jargon, the initiative. Lord Marney, at the suggestion of Mr Tadpole, was quite ready to do this; and so was the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine, and almost the Earl de Mowbray.

But then, when all seemed ripe and ready, and there appeared a prospect of the 'Independence of the House of Lords' being again the favourite toast of Conservative dinners, the oddest rumour in the world got about, which threw such ridicule on these great constitutional movements *in petto*, that, even with the Buckhounds in the distance, and Tadpole at his elbow, Lord Marney hesitated. It seemed, though of course no one could for a moment credit it, that these wrong-headed, rebellious ministers who would not go out, wore—petticoats!

And the great Jamaica debate that had been cooked so long, and the anxiously expected yet almost despaired-of defection of the independent radical section, and the full-dressed visit to the palace that had gladdened the heart of Tadpole, were they all to end in this? Was Conservatism, that mighty mystery of the nineteenth century, to be brained by a fan?

Since the farce of the 'Invincibles' nothing had ever been so ludicrously successful.

Lady Deloraine consoled herself for the 'Bedchamber Plot,' by declaring that Lady St Julians was indirectly the cause of it, and, that had it not been for the anticipation of her official entrance into the royal apartments, the conspiracy would not have been more real than the Meal-tub Plot, or any other of the many imaginary machinations that still haunt the page of history, and occasionally fit about the

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prejudiced memory of nations. Lady St Julians, on the contrary, wrung her hands over the unhappy fate of her enthralled sovereign, deprived of her faithful presence, and obliged to put up with the society of personages of whom she knew nothing, and who called themselves the friends of her youth. The ministers who had missed, especially those who had received, their appointments looked as all men do when they are jilted; embarrassed, and affecting an awkward ease; as if they knew something which, if they told, would free them from the supreme ridicule of their situation, but which, as men of delicacy and honour, they restrained from revealing! All those who had been in fluttering hopes, however faint, of receiving preferment, took courage now that the occasion had passed, and loudly complained of their cruel and undeniable deprivation. The Constitution was wounded in their persons. Some fifty gentlemen who had not been appointed Under-Secretaries of State, moaned over the martyrdom of young ambition.

"Peel ought to have taken office," said Lord Marney.
"What are the women to us?"

"Peel ought to have taken office," said the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine. "He should have remembered how much he owed to Ireland."

"Peel ought to have taken office," said Lord de Mowbray.
"The Garter will become now a mere party badge."

Perhaps it may be allowed to the impartial pen that traces these memoirs of our time to agree, though for a different reason, with these distinguished followers of Sir Robert Peel. One may be permitted to think that under all the circumstances he should have taken office in 1839. His withdrawal seems to have been a mistake. In the great heat of Parliamentary faction which had prevailed since 1831, the royal prerogative, which unfortunately for the rights and liberties and social welfare of the people, had since 1688 been more or less oppressed, had waned fainter and fainter.

THE 'BEDCHAMBER' INCIDENT

A youthful princess on the throne, whose appearance touched the imagination, and to whom her people were generally inclined to ascribe something of that decision of character which becomes those born to command, offered a favourable opportunity to restore the exercise of that regal authority, the usurpation of whose functions has entailed on the English people so much suffering, and so much degradation. It was unfortunate that one, who, if any, should have occupied the proud and national position of the leader of the Tory party, the chief of the people and the champion of the throne, should have commenced his career as minister under Victoria by an unseemly contrariety to the personal wishes of the Queen. The reaction of public opinion, disgusted with years of Parliamentary tumult and the incoherence of party legislation; the balanced state in the kingdom of political parties themselves; the personal character of the sovereign; these were all causes that intimated that a movement in favour of prerogative was at hand. The leader of the Tory party should have vindicated his natural position and availed himself of the gracious occasion; he missed it; and, as the occasion was inevitable, the Whigs enjoyed its occurrence. And thus England witnessed for the first time the portentous anomaly of the oligarchical, or Venetian party, which had in the old days destroyed the free monarchy of England, retaining power merely by favour of the Court.

But we forget, Sir Robert Peel is not the leader of the Tory party; the party that resisted the ruinous mystification that metamorphosed direct taxation by the Crown into indirect taxation by the Commons; that denounced the system which mortgaged industry to protect property; the party which ruled Ireland by a system which reconciled both Churches, and by a series of Parliaments which counted among them lords and commons of both religions; that has maintained at all times the territorial constitution of England as the only basis and security for local government, and which, never-

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theless, once laid on the table of the House of Commons a commercial tariff negotiated at Utrecht, which is the most rational that was ever devised by statesmen; a party that has prevented the Church from being the salaried agent of the State, and has supported through many struggles the parochial polity which secures to every labourer a home.

In a Parliamentary sense that great party has ceased to exist; but I will believe that it still lives in the thought and sentiment and consecrated memory of the English nation. It has its origin in great principles and in noble instincts; it sympathises with the lowly, it looks up to the Most High; it can count its heroes and its martyrs; they have met in its behalf, plunder, proscription, and death. Nor, when it finally yielded to the iron progress of oligarchical supremacy, was its catastrophe inglorious. Its genius was vindicated in golden sentences and with fervent arguments of impassioned logic by St John; and breathed in the intrepid eloquence and patriot soul of William Wyndham. Even now, it is not dead, but sleepeth; and in an age of political materialism, of confused purposes and perplexed intelligence, that aspires only to wealth because it has no faith in other accomplishment, as men rifle cargoes on the verge of shipwreck, Toryism will yet rise from the grave over which Bolingbroke shed his last tear, to bring back strength to the Crown, liberty to the Subject, and to announce that power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the PEOPLE.

From "Sybil"

MACHINE-BREAKING AT STILBRO'

CHARLOTTE BRONTE

WITH the queerest look in the world had the manufacturer for some ten minutes been watching the Irish curate, as the latter made free with the punch, when suddenly that steady

MACHINE-BREAKING AT STILBRO'

grey eye changed, as if another vision came between it and Malone. Moore raised his hand.

"Chut!" he said in his French fashion, as Malone made a noise with his glass. He listened a moment, then rose, put his hat on, and went out at the counting-house door.

The night was still, dark, and stagnant: the water yet rushed on full and fast; its flow seemed almost a flood in the utter silence. Moore's ear, however, caught another sound, very distant but yet dissimilar, broken and rugged,—in short a sound of heavy wheels crunching on a stony road. He returned to the counting-house and lit a lantern, with which he walked down the mill-yard, and proceeded to open the gates. The big wagons were coming on; the dray-horses' huge hoofs were heard splashing in the mud and water. Moore hailed them.

"Hey, Joe Scott! Is all right?"

Probably Joe Scott was at too great a distance to hear the inquiry. He did not answer it.

"Is all right, I say?" again asked Moore, when the elephant-like leader's nose almost touched his. ^{Horrid}

Some one jumped out from the foremost wagon into the road; a voice cried aloud, "Ay, ay, devil; all's raight! we've smashed 'em."

And there was a run. The wagons stood still; they were now deserted.

"Joe Scott!" No Joe Scott answered. "Murgatroyd! Pighills! Sykes!" No reply. Mr Moore lifted his lantern, and looked into the vehicles. There was neither man nor machinery; they were empty and abandoned.

Now Mr Moore loved his machinery. He had risked the last of his capital on the purchase of these frames and shears which to-night had been expected. Speculations most important to his interests depended on the results to be wrought by them. Where were they?

The words "we've smashed 'em" rang in his ears. How

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did the catastrophe affect him? By the light of the lantern he held were his features visible, relaxing to a singular smile—the smile a man of determined spirit wears when he reaches a juncture in his life where this determined spirit is to feel a demand on its strength, when the strain is to be made, and the faculty must bear or break. . . . An impatient trampling of one of the horses made him look up. His eye in the moment caught the gleam of something white attached to a part of the harness. Examined by the light of the lantern this proved to be a folded paper—a billet. It bore no address without; within was the superscription:

To the Devil of Hollow's Miln.

We will not copy the rest of the orthography, which was very peculiar, but translate it into legible English. It ran thus:

Your hellish machinery is shivered to smash on Stilbro' Moor, and your men are lying bound hand and foot in a ditch by the roadside. Take this as a warning from men that are starving, and have starving wives and children to go home to when they have done this deed. If you get new machines, or if you otherwise go on as you have done, you shall hear from us again. Beware!

"Hear from you again? Yes, I'll hear from you again, and you shall hear from me. I'll speak to you directly. On Stilbro' Moor you shall hear from me in a moment."

Having led the wagons within the gates, he hastened towards the cottage. Opening the door, he spoke a few words quickly but quietly to two females who ran to meet him in the passage. He calmed the seeming alarm of one of them by a brief palliative account of what had taken place; to the other he said, "Go into the mill, Sarah—there's the key—and ring the mill-bell as loud as you can. Afterwards you will get another lantern, and help me to light up the front."

Returning to the horses, he unharnessed, fed, and stabled

MACHINE-BREAKING AT STILBRO'

them with equal speed and care, pausing occasionally while so occupied, as if to listen for the mill-bell. It clanged out presently, with irregular but loud and alarming din. The hurried, agitated peal seemed more urgent than if the summons had been steadily given by a more practised hand. On that still night, at that unusual hour, it was heard a long way round. The guests in the kitchen of the Redhouse were startled by the clamour, and declaring that "there must be summat more nor common to do at Hollow's Miln," they called for lanterns, and hurried to the spot in a body. And scarcely had they thronged into the yard with their gleaming lights, when the tramp of horses was heard, and a little man in a shovel hat sitting erect on the back of a shaggy pony, "rode lightly in" followed by an aide-de-camp mounted on a larger steed.

... Mr Moore now appeared, and was immediately confronted by the shovel hat and the shaggy pony.

"Well, Moore, what is your business with us? I thought you would want us to-night—me and the hetman here" (patting his pony's neck), "and Tom and his charger. When I heard your mill-bell I could sit still no longer, so I left Boultby to finish his supper alone. But where is the enemy? I do not see a mask or a smutted face present; and there is not a pane of glass broken in your windows. Have you had an attack, or do you expect one?"

"Oh, not at all! I have neither had one nor expect one," answered Moore coolly. "I only ordered the bell to be rung because I want two or three neighbours to stay here in the Hollow, while I and a couple or so more go over to Stilbro' Moor."

"To Stilbro' Moor! What to do? To meet the wagons?"

"The wagons are come home an hour ago."

"Then that's all right. What more would you have?"

"They came home empty; and Joe Scott and company are left on the moor, and so are the frames. Read that scrawl."

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Mr Helstone received and perused the document of which the contents have before been given.

"Hum! They only served you as they serve others. But, however, the poor fellows in the ditch will be expecting help with some impatience. This is a wet night for such a berth. I and Tom will go with you. Malone will stay behind and take care of the mill." . . . The small number of three volunteered to go; the rest preferred staying behind. . . .

Cheerfulness, it would appear, is a matter that depends fully as much on the state of things within as on the state of things without and around us. I make this trite remark because I happen to know that Messrs Helstone and Moore trotted forth from the mill-yard gates at the head of their very small company, in the best possible spirits. When a ray from a lantern (the three pedestrians of the party each carried one) fell on Mr Moore's face, you could see an unusual, because a lively, spark dancing in his eyes, and a new-found vivacity mantling on his dark physiognomy; and when the rector's visage was illuminated, his hard features were revealed all agrin and ashine with glee. Yet a drizzling night, a somewhat perilous expedition, you would think were not circumstances calculated to enliven those exposed to the wet, and engaged in the expedition. If any member, or members, of the crew who had been at work on Stilbro' Moor had caught a view of this party, they would have had great pleasure in shooting either of the leaders from behind a wall: and the leaders knew this; and the fact is, being both men of steely nerves and steady-beating hearts, were clate with the knowledge. . . . As the party turned into the Stilbro' road, they met what little wind there was; the rain dashed in their faces. Moore had been fretting his companion previously, and now, braced up by the raw breeze, and perhaps irritated by the sharp drizzle, he began to goad him.

"Does your Peninsular news please you still?" he asked.

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"What do you mean?" was the surly demand of the rector.

"I mean, have you still faith in that Baal of a Lord Wellington?"

"And what do you mean now?"

"Do you still believe that this wooden-faced and pebble-hearted idol of England has power to send fire down from heaven to consume the French holocaust you want to offer up?"

"I believe that Wellington will flog Bonaparte's marshals into the sea the day it pleases him to lift his arm."

"But, my dear sir, you can't be serious in what you say. Bonaparte's marshals are great men, who act under the guidance of an omnipotent master-spirit. Your Wellington is the most humdrum of commonplace martinets, whose slow mechanical movements are further cramped by an ignorant home government."

"Wellington is the soul of England. Wellington is the right champion of a good cause, the fit representative of a powerful, a resolute, a sensible, and an honest nation."

"Your good cause, as far as I understand it, is simply the restoration of that filthy, feeble Ferdinand to a throne which he disgraced. Your fit representative of an honest people is a dull-witted drover, acting for a duller-witted farmer; and against these are arrayed victorious supremacy and invincible genius." *Lawfulness halts* ~~Facile~~

"Against legitimacy is arrayed usurpation; against modest, single-minded, righteous, and brave resistance to encroachment is arrayed boastful, double-tongued, selfish, and treacherous ambition to possess. God defend the right!"

"God often defends the powerful."

"What! I suppose the handful of Israelites standing dryshod on the Asiatic side of the Red Sea was more powerful than the host of Egyptians drawn up on the African side? Were they more numerous? Were they better appointed?

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Were they more mighty; in a word, eh? Don't speak, or you'll tell a lie, Moore; you know you will. They were a poor overwrought band of bondsmen. Tyrants had oppressed them through four hundred years; a feeble mixture of women and children diluted their thin ranks; their masters, who roared to follow them through the divided flood, were a set of pampered Ethiops, about as strong and brutal as the lions of Libya. They were armed, horsed, and charioted; the poor Hebrew wanderers were afoot. Few of them, it is likely, had better weapons than their shepherd's crooks or their masons' building tools; their meek and mighty leader himself had only his rod. But bethink you, Robert Moore, right was with them; the God of battles was on their side. Crime and the lost archangel generalled the ranks of Pharaoh, and which triumphed? We know that well 'The Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore'—yea, 'the depths covered them, they sank to the bottom as a stone.' The right hand of the Lord became glorious in power; the right hand of the Lord dashed in pieces the enemy."

" You are all right; only you forget the true parallel. France is Israel, and Napoleon is Moses. Europe, with her old over-gorged empires and rotten dynasties, is corrupt Egypt; gallant France is the Twelve Tribes, and her fresh and vigorous Usurper the Shepherd of Horeb."

" I scorn to answer you."

Moore accordingly answered himself,—at least, he subjoined to what he had just said an additional observation in a lower voice:

" Oh, in Italy he was as great as any Moses! He was the right thing there, fit to head and organize measures for the regeneration of nations. It puzzles me to this day how the conqueror of Lodi should have condescended to become an emperor, a vulgar, a stupid humbug; and still more how a people who had once called themselves republicans should

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have sunk again to the grade of mere slaves. I despise France. If England had gone as far on the road of civilization as France did, she would hardly have retreated so shamelessly."

"You don't mean to say that besotted imperial France is any worse than bloody republican France?" demanded Helstone fiercely.

"I mean to say nothing, but I can think what I please, you know, Mr Helstone, both about France and England; and about revolutions, and regicides, and restorations in general; and the divine right of kings, which you often stickle for in your sermons, and the duty of non-resistance, and the sanity of war, and—

Mr Moore's sentence was here cut short by the rapid rolling up of a gig, and its sudden stoppage in the middle of the road. Both he and the rector had been too much occupied with their discourse to notice its approach till it was close upon them.

"Nah, maister; did the wagons hit home?" demanded a voice from the vehicle.

"Can that be Joe Scott?"

"Ay, ay!" returned another voice; for the gig contained two persons, as was seen by the glimmer of its lamp. The men with the lanterns had now fallen into the rear, or rather, the equestrians of the rescue-party had outridden the pedestrians. "Ay, ay, Mr Moore, it's Joe Scott. I'm bringing him back to you in a bonny pickle. I fand him on top of the moor yonder, him and three others. What will you give me for restoring him to you?"

"Why, my thanks, I believe; for I could better have afforded to lose a better man. That is you, I suppose, Mr Yorke, by your voice?"

"Ay, lad, it's me. I was coming home from Stilbro' market, and just as I got to the middle of the moor, and was whipping on as swift as the wind (for these they say are not

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safe times, thanks to a bad government!), I heard a groan. I pulled up. Some would have whipt on faster; but I've naught to fear that I know of. I don't believe there's a lad in these parts would harm me—at least I'd give them as good as I got if they offered to do it. I said 'Is there aught wrong anywhere?' 'Deed is there,' somebody says, speaking out of the ground, like. 'What's to do? Be sharp and tell me,' I ordered. 'Nobbut four on us ligging in a ditch,' says Joe, as quiet as could be. I telled 'em more shame to 'em, and bid them get up and move on, or I'd lend them a lick of the gig-whip; for my notion was they were all fresh. 'We'd ha' done that an hour sin', but we're teed wi' a bit o' band,' says Joe. So in a while I got down and loosed 'em wi' my penknife; and Scott would ride wi' me, to tell me how it all happened; and t'others are coming on as fast as their feet will bring them."

"Well, I am greatly obliged to you, Mr Yorke."

"Are you, my lad? You know you're not. However, here are the rest approaching. And here, by the Lord, are another set with lights in their pitchers, like the army of Gideon; and as we've th' parson wi' us—good evening, Mr Helstone—we'se do."

Mr Helstone returned the salutation of the individual in the gig very stiffly indeed. That individual proceeded:

"We're eleven strong men, and there's horses and chariots amang us. If we could only fall in wi' some of these starved ragamuffins of frame-breakers, we could win a grand victory. We could iv'ry one be a Wellington—that would please ye, Mr Helstone—and sich paragraphs as we could contrive for t' papers! Briarfield suld be famous. But we'se hev' a column and a half i' th' *Stilbro' Courier* ower this job, as it is, I dare say. I'se expect no less."

"And I'll promise you no less, for I'll write the article myself," returned the rector.

"To be sure, sartainly! And mind ye recommend weel

A CORN RIOT

that them 'at brake t' bits o' frames, and teed Joe Scott's legs wi' band, suld be hung without benefit o' clergy. It's a hanging matter, or suld be. No doubt o' that."

"If I judged them, I'd give them short shrift!" cried Moore. "But I mean to let them quite alone this bout, to give them rope enough, certain that in the end they will hang themselves."

"Let them alone, will ye, Moore? Do you promise that?"

"Promise! No. All I mean to say is, I shall give myself no particular trouble to catch them; but if one falls in my way——"

"You'll snap him up of course. Only you would rather they did something worse than merely stop a wagon before you reckon with them. Well, we'll say no more on the subject at present. Here we are at my door, gentlemen, and I hope you and the men will step in. You will none of you be the worse of a little refreshment."

From "Shirley"

A CORN RIOT CHARLES KINGSLEY

BURSTING through the rotting and half-fallen palings, we entered a wide, rushy, neglected park, and along an old gravel road, now green with grass, we opened on a sheet of frozen water, and, on the opposite bank, the huge square corpse of a hall, the close-shuttered windows of which gave it a dead and ghastly look, except where here and there a single open one showed, as through a black, empty eye-socket, the dark unfurnished rooms within. On the right, beneath us, lay, amid tall elms, a large mass of farm-buildings, into the yard of which the whole mob rushed tumultuously—just in time to see an old man on horseback dart out and gallop hatless up the park, amid the yells of the mob.

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"The old rascal's gone! and he'll call up the yeomanry. We must be quick, boys!" shouted one; and the first signs of plunder showed themselves in an indiscriminate chase after various screaming geese and turkeys; while a few of the more steady went up to the house door, and, knocking, demanded sternly the granary keys.

A fat virago planted herself in the doorway, and commenced railing at them with the cowardly courage which the fancied immunity of their sex gives to coarse women; but she was shoved aside, and took shelter in an upper room, where she stood, screaming and cursing at the window.

The invaders returned, cramming their mouths with bread, and chopping asunder fitches of bacon. The granary doors were broken open, and the contents scrambled for, amid immense waste by the starving wretches. It was a sad sight. Here was a poor shivering woman, hiding scraps of food under her cloak, and hurrying out of the yard to the children she had left at home. There was a tall man, leaning against the palings gnawing ravenously at the same loaf with a little boy, who had scrambled up behind him. Then a huge blackguard came whistling up to me, with a can of ale. "Drink, my beauty, you're tired with hollering by now!"

"The ale is neither yours nor mine. I won't touch it." "Darn your buttons! You said the wheat was ourn acause we growed it—and thereby so's the beer, for we growed the barley too."

And so thought the rest; for the yard was getting full of drunkards, a woman or two among them, reeling knee-deep in the loose straw among the pigs.

"Thresh out they ricks!" roared another.

"Get out the threshing machine."

"You harness the horses!"

"No! there bain't no time. Yeomanry'll be here. You mun leave the ricks."

"Darned if we do. Old Woods shan't get naught by they."

A CORN RIOT

"Fire 'em then, and go on to Slater's farm!"

"As well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb," hiccupped Blinkey, as he rushed through the yard with a lighted brand. I tried to stop him, but fell on my face in the deep straw, and got round the barns to the rickyard just in time to hear a crackle—there was no mistaking it; the windward stack was in a blaze of fire.

I stood awestruck, I cannot tell how long—watching how the live flame-snakes crept and hissed, and leapt and roared, and rushed in long horizontal jets from stack to stack before the howling wind, and fastened their fiery talons on the barn-eaves, and swept over the peaked roofs, and hurled themselves in fiery flakes into the yard below.—The food of man, the labour of years, devoured in aimless ruin! was it my doing? Was it not?

At last I recollected myself, and hurried round again into the straw-yard, where the fire was now falling fast. The only thing which saved the house was the weltering mass of bullocks, pigs, and human beings, drunk and sober, which trampled out unwittingly the flames as fast as they caught.

The fire had seized the roofs of the cart-stables, when a great lubberly boy blubbered out: *Clownish boy shou'd*

"Git my horses out! git my horses out o' the fire! I be so fond o' mun!"

"Well, they ain't done no harm, poor beasts!" and a dozen men ran in to save them; but the poor wretches, screaming with terror, refused to stir. I never knew what became of them; but their shrieks still haunt my dreams. . . .

The yard now became a pandemonium. The more russianly part of the mob—and, alas! there were but too many of them—hurled the furniture out of the windows, or ran off with anything they could carry. In vain, I expostulated, threatened; I was answered by laughter, curses, brandished plunder. Then I found out how large a portion of rascality shelters itself under the wing of every crowd;

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and at the moment I almost excused the rich for overlooking the real sufferers in indignation at the rascals. But even the really starving majority, whose faces proclaimed the grim fact of their misery, seemed gone mad for the moment. The old crust of sullen, dogged patience had broken up, and their whole souls had exploded into reckless fury and brutal revenge; and yet there was no hint of violence against the red fat woman, who, surrounded with her blubbering children, stood screaming and cursing at the first-floor window, getting redder and fatter at every scream. The worst personality she heard was a roar of laughter, in which, such is poor humanity, I could not but join, as her little starved drab of a maid-of-all-work ran out of the door, with a bundle of stolen finery under her arm, and high above the roaring of the flames and the shouts of the rioters rose her mistress's yell:

"O Betsy, Betsy! you little awdacious, unremorseful hussy—a-running away with my best bonnet and shawl!"

The laughter soon, however, subsided when a man rushed breathless into the yard, shouting, "The yeomanry!"

At that sound, to my astonishment, a general panic ensued. The miserable wretches never stopped to inquire how many or how far off they were, but scrambled to every outlet of the yard, trampling each other down in their hurry. I leaped up on the wall, and saw galloping down the park, a mighty armament of some fifteen men, with a tall officer at their head, mounted on a splendid horse.

"There they be! there they be! all the varmers, and young Squire Clayton wi' mun, on his gray hunter! O Lord! O Lord! and all their swoords drawn!"

I thought of the old story in Herodotus—how the Scythian masters returned from war to the rebel slaves who had taken possession of their lands and wives, and brought them down on their knees with terror at the mere sight of the old dreaded dog-whips.

A MINING DISTRICT

I did not care to run. I was utterly disgusted, disappointed with myself—the people. I longed, for the moment, to die and leave it all; and, left almost alone, sat down on a stone, buried my head between my hands, and tried vainly to shut out from my ears the roaring of the fire.

From "After Locks"

A MINING DISTRICT IN EARLY VICTORIAN DAYS

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

FAR as the eye could reach, and the region was level except where a range of limestone hills formed its distant limit, a wilderness of cottages, or tenements that were hardly entitled to a higher name, were scattered for many miles over the land; some detached, some collected in little rows, some clustering in groups, yet rarely forming continuous streets, but interspersed with blazing furnaces, heaps of burning coal, and piles of smouldering ironstone; while forges and engine-chimneys roared and puffed in all directions, and indicated the frequent presence of the mouth of the mine, and the bank of the coal-pit. Notwithstanding the whole country might be compared to a vast rabbit-warren, it was nevertheless intersected with canals, crossing each other at various levels; and though the subterranean operations were prosecuted with such avidity that it was not uncommon to observe whole rows of houses awry, from the shifting and hollow nature of the soil, still, intermingled with heaps of mineral refuse, or of metallic dust, patches of the surface might here and there be prepared, covered, as if in mockery, with grass and corn, looking very much like those gentleman's sons that we used to read of in our youth, stolen by the chimney-sweeps, and owing some imitations of their breeding beneath their

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grimy livery. But a tree or a shrub, such an existence was unknown in this dingy rather than dreary region. . . .

They came forth: the mine delivers its gang and the pit its bondsmen; the forge is silent and the engine is still. The plain is covered with the swarming multitude: bands of stalwart men, broad-chested and muscular, wet with toil, and black as the children of the tropics; troops of youth, alas! of both sexes, though neither their raiment nor their language indicates the difference; all are clad in male attire, and oaths that men might shudder at, issue from lips born to breathe words of sweetness. Yet, these are to be, some are, the mothers of England! But can we wonder at the hideous coarseness of their language when we remember the savage rudeness of their lives? Naked to the waist, an iron chain fastened to a belt of leather runs between their legs clad in canvas trousers, while on hands and feet an English girl for twelve, sometimes for sixteen hours a day, hauls and hurries tubs of coals up subterranean roads, dark, precipitous, and splashy; circumstances that seem to have escaped the notice of the Society for the Abolition of Negro Slavery. Those worthy gentlemen, too, appear to have been singularly unconscious of the sufferings of the little trappers, which was remarkable as many of them were in their own employ.

See, too, these emerge from the bowels of the earth! Infants of four and five years of age, many of them girls, pretty and still soft and timid; entrusted with the fulfilment of responsible duties, and the nature of which entails on them the necessity of being the earliest to enter the mine and the latest to leave it. Their labour indeed is not severe, for that would be impossible, but it is passed in darkness and in solitude. They endure that punishment which philosophical philanthropy has invented for the direst criminals, and which those criminals deem more terrible than the death for which it is substituted. Hour after hour elapses, and all that reminds the infant trappers of the world they have quitted

A MINING DISTRICT

and that which they have joined, is the passage of the coal-wagons for which they open the air-doors of the galleries, and on keeping which doors constantly closed, except at this moment of passage, the safety of the mine and the lives of the persons employed in it entirely depend. . . .

A small party of miners approached a house of more pretension than the generality of the dwellings, and announcing its character by a flagrant sign of the Rising Sun. They entered it as men accustomed, and were greeted with smiles and many civil words from the lady at the bar, who inquired cheerfully what the gentlemen would have. They soon found themselves in the tap, and, though it was not entirely unoccupied, in their accustomed places; for there seemed a general understanding that they enjoyed a prescriptive right.

With hunches of white bread in their black hands, and grinning with their sable countenances and ivory teeth, they really looked like a gang of negroes at a revel.

The cups of ale circulated, the pipes were lighted, the preliminary puffs achieved. There was at length silence, when he who seemed their leader, and who filled a sort of president's seat, took his pipe from his mouth, and then uttering the first complete sentence that had yet been expressed aloud, thus delivered himself.

"The fact is, we are commied to death."

"You never spake a truer word, Master Nixon," said one of his companions.

"It's gospel, every word of it," said another.

"And the point is," continued Master Nixon, "what are we for to do?"

"Ay, surely," said a collier, "that's the marrow."

"Ay, ay," agreed several; "there it is."

"The question is," said Nixon, looking round with a magisterial air, "what *is* wages? I say, 'tayn't sugar, 'tayn't tea, 'tayn't bacon. . . . I don't think 'tis candles; but of this I be sure—'tayn't waistcoats."

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Here there was a general groan.

"Comrades," continued Nixon, "you know what has happened; you know as how Juggins applied for his balance after his tommy-book was paid up, and that incarnate nigger Diggs has made him take two waistcoats. Now the question rises, what is a collier to do with waistcoats? Pawn 'em I s'pose to Diggs' son-in-law, next door to his father's shop, and sell the ticket for sixpence. Now, there's the question; keep to the question; the question is waistcoats and tommy's first waistcoats and then tommy."

"I have been making a pound a-week, these two months past," said another, "but, as I'm a sinner saved, I have never seen the young Queen's picture yet."

"And I have been obliged to pay the doctor for my poor wife in tommy," said another. "Doctor," I said, says I, "I blush to do it but all I have got is tommy, and what shall it be, bacon or cheese?" "Cheese at tenpence a pound," says he, "which I buy for my servants at sixpence! Never mind," says he, for he is a thorough Christian, "I'll take the tommy as I find it."

"Juggins has got his rent to pay, and is afeard of the bums," said Nixon, "and he has got two waistcoats!"

"Besides," said another, "Diggs' tommy is only open once a-week, and if you're not there in time, you go over for another seven days. And it's such a distance, and he keeps a body there such a time; it's always a day's work for my poor woman; she can't do nothing after it, what with the waiting, and the standing, and the cussing of Master Joseph Diggs; for he do swear at the women when they rush in for the first turn, most fearful."

"They do say he's a shocking little dog."

"Master Joseph is very violent, but there is no one like old Diggs for grabbing a bit of one's wages. He do so love it! And then he says you need never be at no loss for nothing; you can find everything under my roof. I should like to

A MINING DISTRICT

know who is to mend our shoes. Has Gaffer Diggs a cobbler's stall?"

"Or sell us a penn'orth of potatoes," said another. "Or a ha'porth of milk."

"No; and so to get them one is obliged to go and sell some tommy; and much one gets for it. Bacon at ninepence a pound at Diggs', which you may get at a huckster's for sixpence; and therefore the huckster can't be expected to give you more than fourpence-halfpenny. . . ."

"But what business has a butty to keep a shop?" inquired a stranger. "The law touches him."

"I should like to know who would touch the law," said Nixon; "not I, for one. Them tommy-shops is very delicate things; they won't stand no handling, I can tell you that."

"But he cannot force you to take goods," said the stranger; "he must pay you in current coin of the realm, if you demand it."

"They only pay us once in five weeks," said a collier, "and how is a man to live meanwhile? And suppose we were to make shift for a month or five weeks, and have all our money coming, and have no tommy out of the shop, what would the butty say to me? He would say, 'Do you want e'er a note, this time?' and if I was to say, 'No,' then he would say, 'You've no call to go down to work any more here.' And that's what I call forsation."

"Ay, ay," said another collier; "ask for the young Queen's picture, and you would soon have to put your shirt on, and go up the shaft."

"It's them long reckonings that force us to the tommy-shops," said another collier; "and if a butty turns you away because you won't take no tommy, you're a marked man in every field about."

. . . "But why don't you state your grievances to the landlords and lessees?" said the stranger.

"I take it you be a stranger in these parts, sir," said

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Master Nixon, following up this remark by an enormous puff. He was the oracle of his circle, and there was silence whenever he was inclined to address them, which was not too often, though when he spoke, his words, as his followers often observed, were a regular ten-yard coal.

"I take it you be a stranger in these parts, sir, or else you would know that it's as easy for a miner to speak to a main-master, as it is for me to pick coal with this here clay. Sir, there's a gulf atween 'em. I went into the pit when I was five year old, and I counts forty year in the service come Martinmas, and a very good age, sir, for a man that does his work, and I knows what I'm speaking about. In forty year, sir, a man sees a pretty deal, 'specially when he don't move out of the same spot, and keeps 'tention. I've been at play, sir, several times in forty year, and have seen as great stick-outs as ever happened in this country. I've seen the people at play for weeks together, and so clammed that I never tasted nothing but a potato and a little salt for more than a fortnight. Talk of tommy, that was hard fare, but we were holding out for our rights, and that's sauce for any gander. And I'll tell you what, sir, that I never knew the people play yet, but if a word had passed atween them and the main-masters aforehand, it might not have been settled; but you can't get at them, any way. Atween the poor man and the gentleman there never was no connection, and that's the wital mischief of this country."

Few "sybil"

A STRIKERS' DEPUTATION

E. C. GASKELL

The day arrived on which the masters were to have an interview with a deputation of the work-people. The meeting was to take place in a public room at an hotel; and,

A STRIKERS' DEPUTATION

there, about eleven o'clock, the mill-owners who had received the foreign orders, began to collect.

Of course, the first subject, however full their minds might be of another, was the weather. Having done their duty by all the showers and sunshine which had occurred during the past week, they fell to talking about the business which brought them together. There might be about twenty gentlemen in the room, including some by courtesy, who were not immediately concerned with the settlement of the present question; but who, nevertheless, were sufficiently interested to attend. These were divided into little groups, who did not seem by any means unanimous. Some were for a slight concession, just a sugar-plum to quieten the naughty child, a sacrifice to peace and quietness. Some were steadily and vehemently opposed to the dangerous precedent of yielding one jot or one tittle to the outward force of a turn-out. It was teaching the work-people how to become masters, said they. Did they want the wildest thing hereafter, they would know that the way to obtain their wishes would be to strike work. Besides one or two of those present had just returned from the New Bailey, where one of the turn-outs had been tried for a cruel assault on a poor north country weaver, who had attempted to work at the low price. They were indignant, and justly so, at the merciless manner in which the poor fellow had been treated; and their indignation at wrong took (as it so often does) the extreme form of revenge. They felt as if, rather than yield to the body of men who were resorting to such cruel measures towards their fellow-workmen, they, the masters, would sooner relinquish all the benefits to be derived from the fulfilment of the commission, in order that the workmen should suffer keenly. They forgot that the strike was in this instance the result of want and need, suffered unjustly, as the endurers believed; for, however insane, and without ground of reason, such was their belief, and such was the cause of their violence.

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It is a great truth that you cannot extinguish violence by violence. You may put it down for a time; but while you are crowing over your imaginary success, see if it does not return with seven devils worse than its former self!

No one thought of treating the workmen as brethren and friends, and openly, clearly, and as appealing to reasonable men, stating exactly and fully the circumstances which led the masters to think that it was the wise policy of the time to make sacrifices themselves, and to hope for them from the operatives.

In going from group to group in the room you caught such sentences as the following:

"Poor devils! they are near enough to starving, I'm afraid. Mrs Alden makes two cow's heads into soup every week, and people come several miles to fetch it; and if these times last we must try and do more. But we must not be bullied into anything!"

"A rise of a shilling or so won't make much difference, and they will go away thinking they have gained their point."

"That's the very thing I object to. They'll think so, and whenever they've a point to gain, no matter how unreasonable, they'll strike work."

"It really injures them more than us."

"I don't see how our interests can be separated."

"The d—d brute had thrown vitriol on the poor fellow's ankles, and you know what a bad part that is to heal. He had to stand still with the pain, and that left him at the mercy of the cruel wretch, who beat him about the head till you'd hardly have known he was a man. They doubt if he'll live."

"If it were only for that, I'll stand out against them, even if it were the cause of my ruin."

"Ay, I for one won't yield one farthing to the cruel brutes; they're more like wild beasts than human beings."

(Well! who might have made them different?)

A STRIKERS' DEPUTATION

"I say, Carson, just go and tell Duncombe of this fresh instance of their abominable conduct. He's wavering, but I think this will decide him."

The door was now opened, and a waiter announced that the men were below, and asked if it were the pleasure of the gentlemen that they should be shown up.

They assented, and rapidly took their places round the official table; looking as like as they could, to the Roman senators who awaited the irruption of Brennus and his Gauls.

Tramp, tramp, came the heavy clogged feet up the stairs; and in a minute five wild, earnest-looking men stood in the room. John Barton, from some mistake as to time was not among them. Had they been larger-boned men, you would have called them gaunt; as it was they were little of stature, and their fustian clothes hung loosely on their shrunk limbs. In choosing their delegates, too, the operatives had had more regard to their brains and power of speech than to their wardrobes; they might have read the opinions of that worthy Professor Teufelsdröckh in *Sartor Resartus*, to judge from the dilapidated coats and trousers which yet clothed men of parts and of power. It was long since many of them had known the luxury of a new article of dress; and air-gaps were to be seen in their garments. Some of the masters were rather affronted at such a ragged detachment coming between the wind and their nobility; but what cared they?

At the request of a gentleman hastily chosen to act as chairman, the leader of the delegates read, in a high-pitched, psalm-singing voice, a paper, containing the operatives' statement of the case at issue, their complaints, and their demands, which were not remarkable for moderation.

He was then desired to withdraw for a few minutes with his fellow delegates to another room, while the masters considered what should be their definitive answer.

When the men had left the room a whispered earnest

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consultation took place, every one reurging his former arguments. The conceders carried the day; but only by a majority of one. The minority haughtily and audibly expressed their dissent from the measures to be adopted; even after the delegates re-entered the room; their words and looks did not pass unheeded by the quick-eyed operatives; their names were registered in bitter hearts.

The masters could not consent to the advance demanded by the workmen. They would agree to give one shilling a week more than they previously offered. Were the delegates empowered to accept such offer?

They were empowered to accept or decline any offer made that day by the masters.

Then it might be as well for them to consult among themselves as to what should be their decision. They again withdrew.

It was not for long. They came back and positively declined any compromise of their demands.

. . . Now there had been some by-play at this meeting not recorded in the Manchester newspapers which gave an account of the more regular part of the transaction.

While the men had stood grouped near the door, on their first entrance, Mr Harry Carson had taken out his silver pencil, and had drawn an admirable caricature of them—lank, ragged, dispirited, and famine-stricken. Underneath he wrote a hasty quotation from the fat knight's speech in *Henry IV*. He passed it to one of his neighbours, who acknowledged the likeness instantly, and by him, it was sent round to the others, who all smiled and nodded their heads. When it came back to its owner he tore the back of the letter on which it was drawn, in two; twisted them up, and flung them into the fireplace; but careless whether they reached their aim or not, he did not look to see that they fell just short of the consuming cinders.

This proceeding was closely watched by one of the men.

A STRIKERS' DEPUTATION

He watched the masters as they left the hotel (laughing, some of them were at passing jokes), and when all had gone, he re-entered. He went to the waiter, who recognized him.

"There's a bit of a picture up yonder, as one o' the gentlemen threw away; I've a little lad at home as dearly loves a picture; by your leave I'll go up for it."

The waiter, good-natured and sympathetic, accompanied him upstairs; saw the paper picked up and untwisted, and then, being convinced by a hasty glance at its contents, that it was only what the man had called it, "a bit of a picture," he allowed him to bear away his prize.

Towards seven o'clock that evening many operatives began to assemble in a room in the Weaver's Arms public-house, a room appropriated for festive 'occasions' as the landlord, in his circular, on opening the premises had described it. But, alas! it was on no festive occasion that they met there on this night. Starved, irritated, despairing men, they were assembling to hear the answer that morning given by the masters to the delegates; after which, as was stated in the notice, a gentleman from London would have the honour of addressing the meeting on the present state of affairs between the employers and the employed, or (as he chose to term them) the idle and the industrious classes. The room was not large, but its bareness of furniture made it appear so. Unshaded gas flared down on the lean and unwashed artisans as they entered, their eyes blinking in the excess of light.

They took their seats on benches, and awaited the deputation. The latter, gloomily and ferociously, delivered the masters' ultimatum, adding thereunto not one word of their own; and it sank all the deeper into the sore hearts of the listeners for their forbearance.

Then the "gentleman from London" (who had been previously informed of the masters' decision) entered. . . . After a burst of eloquence in which he blended the deeds of the elder and the younger Brutus, and magnified the resistless

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might of the "millions of Manchester," the Londoner descended to matter-of-fact business, and in his capacity this way he did not belie the good judgment of those who had sent him as delegate. Masses of people when left to their own free choice, seem to have discretion in distinguishing men of natural talent; it is a pity they so little regard temper and principles. He rapidly dictated resolutions, and suggested measures. He wrote out a stirring placard for the walls. He proposed sending delegates to intreat the assistance of other trades unions in other towns. He headed the list of subscribing unions, by a liberal donation from that with which he was specially connected in London; and what was more, and more uncommon, he paid down the money in real, clinking, blinking, golden sovereigns! The money, alas, was cravingly required; but before alleviating any private necessities on the morrow, small sums were handed to each of the delegates, who were in a day or two to set out on their expeditions to Glasgow, Newcastle, Nottingham, etc. These men were, most of them, members of the deputation which had, that morning, waited on the masters. After he had drawn up some letters and spoken a few more stirring words, the gentleman from London withdrew, previously shaking hands all round; and many speedily followed him from the house. . . .

But now tongues were hushed, and all eyes were directed towards the member of the deputation who had that morning returned to the hotel, to obtain possession of Harry Carson's clever caricature of the operatives.

The heads clustered together, to gaze at, and detect the likenesses.

"That's John Slater! I'd ha' known him anywhere by his big nose! Lord! how like; that's me, by G-d, it's the very way I'm obligated to pin my waistcoat up, to hide that I've gotten no shirt. That *is* a shame and I'll not stand it."

A STRIKERS' DEPUTATION

"Well!" said John Slater, after having acknowledged his nose and his likeness: "I could laugh at a jest as well as e'er the best on 'em, though it did tell again mysel', if I were not clemming" (his eyes filled with tears, he was a poor, pinched, sharp-featured man with a gentle and melancholy expression of countenance) "and if I could keep from thinking of them at home as is clemming; but with their cries for food ringing in my ears, and making me afeard of going home, and wonder if I should hear them wailing out if I lay cold and drowned at th' bottom o' th' canal, there,—why, man, I cannot laugh at ought. It seems to make me sad that there is any that can make game on what they've never knowed; as can make such laughable pictures on men whose very hearts within 'em are raw and sore as ours were, and are, God help us."

John Barton began to speak, and they turned to him with great attention. . . .

"You'll wonder, chaps, how I came to miss the time this morning, I'll just tell you what I was a-doing. Th' chaplain at th' New Bailey sent and gived me an order to see Jonas Higginbotham; he was taken up last week for throwing vitriol in a knob-stick's face. Well, I couldn't help but go; and I didn't reckon it would ha' kept me so late. Jonas were like one crazy when I got to him; he said he could na' get rest night or day, for the face o' the poor fellow he had damaged; then he thought on his weak, clemmed look, as he tramped, footsore, into town; and Jonas thought maybe, he had left them at home, as would look for news, and hope, and get none, but haply, tidings of his death. Well, Jonas had thought on these things till he could not rest, but walked up and down continually, like a wild beast in his cage. At last he bethought him on a way to help a bit, and he got th' chaplain to send for me; and he telled me this; . . . to get his silver watch, as was his mother's and sell it as well as I could, and take the money, and bid the poor knob-stick send it to his friends beyond Burnley, and I were to take

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him Jonas' kind regards, and he humbly axed him to forgive him.

"So I did what Jonas wished. But bless your life, none of us would ever throw vitriol again (at least at a knob-stick) if they could see the sight I saw to-day. The man lay, his face all wrapped in cloths, so I didn't see *that*; but not a limb, nor a bit of a limb, could keep from quivering with pain. He would ha' bitten his hand to keep down his moans, but couldn't, his face hurt him so, if he moved it, e'er so little. . . . But what I'm more especial naming it now for is this . . . that I for one, ha' seen enough of what comes of attacking knob-sticks, and I'll ha' nought to do with it no more."

There were some expressions of disapprobation, but John did not mind them.

. . . "It's the masters as has wrought this woe; it's the masters as should pay for it. Him as called me a coward just now can try if I am one or not. Set me to serve out the masters, and see if there's ought I'll stick at."

"It would give th' masters a bit on a fright if one on them were beaten within an inch of his life," said one.

"Ah! or beaten till no life were left in him," growled another.

And so with words, or looks that told more than words, they built up a deadly plan. Deeper and darker grew the import of their speeches, as they stood hoarsely muttering their meaning out, and glaring, with eyes that told of the terror their own thoughts were to them, upon their neighbours. Their clenched fists, their set teeth, their livid looks, all told the suffering which their minds were voluntarily undergoing in the contemplation of crime, and in familiarising themselves with its details.

Then came one of those fierce, terrible oaths which bind members of trades unions to any given purpose. Then, under the flaring gas-light, they met together to consult

A CURIOUS TRADE UNION

further. With the distrust of guilt, each was suspicious of his neighbour; each dreaded the treachery of another. A number of pieces of paper (the identical letter on which the caricature had been drawn that very morning) were torn up and *one was marked*. Then all were folded up again, looking exactly alike. They were shuffled together in a hat. The gas was extinguished; each drew out a paper. The gas was relighted. Then each went as far as he could from his fellows, and examined the paper he had drawn, without saying a word, and with a countenance as rigid and stony as he could make it.

Then, still rigidly silent, they each took up their hats, and went every one his own way.

From "Mary Barton"

A CURIOUS TRADE UNION

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

WINDING through many obscure lanes, Mick and his friend at length turned into a passage which ended in a square court of a not inconsiderable size, and which was surrounded by high buildings that had the appearance of warehouses. Entering one of these, and taking up a dim lamp that was placed on the stone of an empty hearth, Devilsdust led his friend through several unoccupied and unfurnished rooms until he came to one in which there were some signs of occupation.

"I must go," said Devilsdust; "and you must rest here till you are sent for. Now mind, whatever is bid you, obey; and whatever you see, be quiet. There," and Devilsdust, taking a flask out of his pocket, held it forth to his friend, "give a good pull, man, I can't leave it you, for though your heart must be warm, your head must be cool," and so saying he vanished.

Notwithstanding the animating draught, the heart of

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Mick Radley trembled. There are some moments when the nervous system defies even brandy. Mick was on the eve of a great and solemn incident, round which for years his imagination had gathered and brooded. Often in that imagination he had conceived the scene, and successfully confronted its perils or its trials. Often had the occasion been the drama of many a triumphant reverie, but the stern presence of reality had dispelled all his fancy and all his courage. He recalled the warning of Julia, who had often dissuaded him from the impending step; that warning received with so much scorn and treated with so much levity. He began to think that women were always right; he even meditated over the possibility of a retreat. He looked around him; the glimmering lamp scarcely indicated the outline of the obscure chamber. It was losty, nor in the obscurity was it possible for the eye to reach the ceiling, which several huge beams seemed to cross transversely, looming in the darkness. There was apparently no window, and the door by which they had entered was not easily to be recognised. Mick had just taken up the lamp and was surveying his position, when a slight noise startled him, and looking round he beheld at some little distance two forms which he hoped were human.

Enveloped in dark cloaks and wearing black masks, a conical cap of the same colour adding to their considerable height, each held a torch. They stood in silence, two awful sentries.

Their appearance appalled, their stillness terrified Mick: he remained with his mouth open, and the lamp in his extended hand. At length, unable any longer to sustain the solemn mystery, and plucking up his natural audacity, he exclaimed, "I say, what do you want?"

All was silent.

"Come, come," said Mick, much alarmed; "none of this sort of thing. I say, you must speak, though."

A CURIOUS TRADE UNION

The figures advanced; they stuck their torches in a niche that was by; and then they placed each of them a hand on the shoulder of Mick.

"No, no; none of that," said Mick, trying to disem-^s
barrass himself.

But, notwithstanding this fresh appeal, one of the silent masks pinioned his arms; and in a moment the eyes of the helpless friend of Devilsdust were bandaged.

Conducted by these guides, it seemed to Mick that he was traversing interminable rooms, or rather galleries, for once stretching out his arm, while one of his supporters had momentarily quitted him to open some gate, Mick touched a wall. At length one of the masks spoke and said, "In five minutes you will be in the presence of the SEVEN: prepare."

At this moment rose the sound of distant voices singing in concert, and gradually increasing in volume as Mick and the masks advanced. One of these attendants now notifying to their charge that he must kneel down, Mick found that he rested on a cushion, while at the same time, his arms still being pinioned, he seemed to be left alone.

The voices became louder and louder; Mick could distinguish the words and burthen of the hymn; he was sensible that many people were entering the apartment; he could distinguish the measured tread of some solemn procession. Round the chamber, more than once they moved with slow and awful step. Suddenly that movement ceased; there was a pause of a few minutes; at length a voice spoke. "I denounce John Briars." condemn.

"Why?" said another.

"He offers to take nothing but piece-work; the man who does piece-work is guilty of less defensible conduct than a drunkard. The worst passions of our nature are enlisted in support of piece-work. Avarice, meanness, cunning, hypocrisy, all excite and feed upon the miserable votary who works by the task and not by the hour. A man who earns by piece-

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work forty shillings per week, the usual wages for day-work being twenty, robs his fellows of a week's employment; therefore I denounce John Briars."

"Let it go forth," said the other voice; "John Briars is denounced. If he receive another week's wages by the piece, he shall not have the option of working the week after for time. No. 87, see to John Briars."

"I denounce Claughton and Hicks," said another voice.

"Why?"

"They have removed Gregory Ray from being a superintendent, because he belonged to this lodge."

"Brethren, is it your pleasure that there shall be a turn-out for ten days at Claughton and Hicks?"

"It is our pleasure," cried several voices.

"No. 34, give orders to-morrow that the works at Claughton and Hicks stop till further orders."

"Brethren," said another voice, "I propose the expulsion from this Union of any member who shall be known to boast of his superior ability, as to either the quantity or quality of the work he can do, either in public or private company. Is it your pleasure?"

"It is."

"Brethren," said a voice that seemed a presiding one, "before we proceed to the receipt of the revenue from the different districts of this lodge, there is, I am informed, a stranger present, who prays to be admitted into our fraternity. Are all robed in the mystic robe? are all masked in the secret mask?"

"All!"

"Then, let us pray!" And thereupon, after a movement which intimated that all present were kneeling, the presiding voice offered up an extemporary prayer of power and even eloquence. This was succeeded by the Hymn of Labour, and at its conclusion the arms of the neophyte were unpinioned, and then his eyes were unbandaged.

A CURIOUS TRADE UNION

Mick found himself in a lofty and spacious room lighted with many tapers. Its walls were hung with black cloth; at a table covered with the same material, were seated seven persons in surplices and masked, the president on a loftier seat; above which, on a pedestal, was a skeleton complete. On each side of the skeleton was a man robed and masked, and holding a drawn sword; and on each side of Mick was a man in the same garb holding a battleaxe. On the table was the sacred volume open, and at a distance, ranged in order on each side of the room, was a row of persons in white robes and white masks, and holding torches.

"Michael Radley," said the President. "Do you voluntarily swear in the presence of Almighty God and before these witnesses, that you will execute with zeal and alacrity, so far as in you lies, every task and injunction that the majority of your brethren, testified by the mandate of this grand committee, shall impose upon you, in furtherance of our common welfare, of which they are the sole judges; such as the chastisement of Nobs, the assassination of oppressive and tyrannical masters, or the demolition of all mills, works, and shops, that shall be deemed by us incorrigible? Do you swear this in the presence of Almighty God, and before these witnesses?"

"I do swear it," replied a tremulous voice.

"Then rise and kiss that book."

Mick slowly rose from his kneeling position, advanced with a trembling step, and bending, embraced with reverence the open volume.

Immediately every one unmasked; Devilsdust came forward, and taking Mick by the hand, led him to the President, who received him pronouncing some mystic rhymes. He was covered with a robe, and presented with a torch, and then ranged in order with his companions. Thus terminated the initiation of Dandy Mick into a TRADES UNION.

From "Sybil"

SCHOOLS

A YOUNG LADY LEAVES SCHOOL

W. M. THACKERAY

WHILE the present century was in its teens, and on one sunshiny morning in June, there drove up to the great iron gate of Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies, on Chiswick Mall, a large family coach, with two fat horses in blazing harness, driven by a fat coachman in a three-cornered hat and wig, at the rate of four miles an hour. A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton's shining brass plate, and as he pulled the bell, at least a score of young heads were seen peering out of the narrow windows of the stately old house. Nay, the acute observer might have recognised the little red nose of good-natured Miss Jemima Pinkerton herself, rising over some geranium pots in the window of that lady's own drawing-room.

"It is Mrs Sedley's coach, sister," said Miss Jemima. "Sambo, the black servant, has just rung the bell; and the coachman has a new red waistcoat."

"Have you completed all the necessary preparations incident to Miss Sedley's departure, Miss Jemima?" asked Miss Pinkerton herself, that majestic lady: the Semiramis of Hammersmith, the friend of Doctor Johnson, the correspondent of Mrs Chapone herself.

"The girls were up at four this morning, packing her trunks, sister," replied Miss Jemima; "we have made her a bow-pot."

"Say a bouquet, sister Jemima, 'tis more genteel."

"Well, a booky as big almost as a haystack. I have put

A YOUNG LADY LEAVES SCHOOL

up two bottles of the gillyflower water for Mrs Sedley, and the receipt for making it, in Amelia's box."

"And I trust, Miss Jemima, you have made a copy of Miss Sedley's account. This is it, is it? Very good—ninety-three pounds, four shillings. Be kind enough to address it to John Sedley, Esquire, and to seal this billet which I have written to his lady."

In Miss Jemima's eyes, an autograph letter of her sister, Miss Pinkerton, was an object of as deep veneration as would have been a letter from a sovereign. Only when her pupils quitted the establishment, or when they were about to be married, and once, when poor Miss Birch died of the scarlet fever, was Miss Pinkerton known to write personally to the parents of her pupils; and it was Jemima's opinion that if anything could console Mrs Birch for her daughter's loss, it would be that pious and eloquent composition in which Miss Pinkerton announced the event.

In the present instance Miss Pinkerton's 'billet' was to the following effect:

THE MALL, CHISWICK,
June 15, 18—

MADAM,

After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honour and happiness of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents, as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. Those virtues which characterise the young English gentlewoman, those accomplishments which become her birth and station, will not be found wanting in the amiable Miss Sedley, whose *industry* and *obedience* have endeared her to her instructors, and whose delightful sweetness of temper has charmed her *aged* and her *youthful* companions.

In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realised her friends' *fondest wishes*. In geography there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the backboard, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended

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as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified deportment and carriage, so requisite for every young lady of fashion.

In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy of an establishment which has been honoured by the presence of *The Great Lexicographer*, and the patronage of the admirable Mrs Chapone. In leaving the Mall, Miss Amelia carries with her the hearts of her companions and the affectionate regards of her mistress, who has the honour to subscribe herself,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant,

BARBARA PINKERTON

P.S.—Miss Sharp accompanies Miss Sedley. It is particularly requested that Miss Sharp's stay in Russell Square may not exceed ten days. The family of distinction with whom she is engaged desire to avail themselves of her services as soon as possible.

This letter completed, Miss Pinkerton proceeded to write her own name and Miss Sedley's in the fly-leaf of a Johnson's Dictionary—the interesting work which she invariably presented to her scholars on their departure from the Mall. On the cover was inserted a copy of "Lines addressed to a young lady on quitting Miss Pinkerton's school, at the Mall; by the late revered Doctor Samuel Johnson." In fact the Lexicographer's name was always on the lips of this majestic woman, and a visit he had paid to her was the cause of her reputation and her fortune. . . .

Now Miss Amelia was a young lady of such singular species that she deserved not only all that Miss Pinkerton said in her praise, but had many charming qualities which that pompous old Minerva of a woman could not see, from the differences of rank and age between her pupil and herself.

For she could not only sing like a lark, or a Mrs Billington, and dance like a Hillisberg or Parisot; and embroider beautifully and spell as well as a Dixonary itself; but she had such a kindly, smiling, tender, gentle, generous heart of her own, as won the love of everybody who came near her, from

MONTEM

Minerva herself down to the poor girl in the scullery and the one-eyed tart-woman's daughter, who was permitted to vend her wares once a week to the young ladies in the Mall. She had twelve intimate and bosom friends out of the twenty-four young ladies. Even envious Miss Briggs never spoke ill of her; high and mighty Miss Saltire (Lord Dexter's granddaughter) allowed that her figure was genteel; and as for Miss Swartz, the rich woolly-haired mulatto from St Kitts, on the day Amelia went away she was in such a passion of tears, that they were obliged to send for Dr Floss, and half tipsify her with salvolatile. Miss Pinkerton's attachment was, as may be supposed, from the high position and eminent virtues of that lady, calm and dignified; but Miss Jemima had already whimpered several times at the idea of Amelia's departure; and, but for the fear of her sister, would have gone off in downright hysterics, like the heiress (who paid double) of St Kitts. Such luxury of grief, however, is only allowed to parlour-boarders. Honest Jemima had all the bills, and the washing, and the mending, and the puddings, and the plate and crockery, and the servants to superintend. But why speak about her? It is probable that we shall not hear of her again from this moment to the end of time, and that, when the great filigree iron gates are once closed on her, she and her awful sister will never issue therefrom into this little world of history.

From "Vanity Fair"

MONTEM

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

ONE need hardly remind the reader that this celebrated ceremony of which the origin is lost in obscurity and which now occurs triennially, is the tenure by which Eton College holds some of its domains; the waving of a flag by one of

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its scholars on a mount near the village of Salt Hill, and to which without doubt it gives the name, since on this day every visitor to Eton, and every traveller in its vicinity, from the monarch to the peasant, are stopped on the road by youthful brigands in picturesque costume, and summoned to contribute "salt," in the shape of coin of the realm, to the purse collecting for the Captain of Eton, the senior scholar on the foundation, who is about to repair to King's College, Cambridge.

On this day, the Captain of Eton appears in a dress as martial as his title; indeed, each sixth-form boy represents in his uniform, though perhaps not according to the strict rules of the Horse Guards, an officer of the army. One is a marshal, another an ensign. There is a lieutenant too; and the remainder are sergeants. Each of those who are entrusted with these ephemeral commissions, has one or more attendants: the number of these varying according to his rank. These Servitors are selected, according to the wishes of the several members of the sixth form, out of the ranks of the lower boys, that is, those who are below the fifth form; and all these attendants are arrayed in a variety of fancy dresses. The senior Oppidan and the senior Colleger next to the Captains of those two divisions of the school, figure also in fancy costume, and are called "Salt-bearers." It is their business, together with the twelve senior Collegers of the fifth form, who are called "Runners," and whose costume is also determined by the taste of the wearers, to levy the contributions. And all the Oppidans of the fifth form, among whom ranked Coningsby, class as "Corporals," and are severally followed by one or more lower boys, who are denominated "Polemen," but who appear in their ordinary dress.

It was a bright fine morning; the bells of Eton and Windsor rang merrily; everybody was astir, and every moment some gay equipage drove into the town. Gaily

clustering in the thronged precincts of the College might be observed many a glistening form; airy Greek, or sumptuous Ottoman, heroes of the Holy Sepulchre, Spanish Hidalgos who had fought at Pavia, Highland Chiefs who had charged at Culloden, gay in the tartan of Prince Charlie. The Long Walk was full of busy groups in scarlet coats or fanciful uniforms; some in earnest conversation, some criticising the arriving guests; others encircling some magnificent hero, who astounded them with his slashed doublet or flowing plume.

A knot of boys, sitting on the Long Walk wall, with their feet swinging in the air, watched the arriving guests of the Provost.

"I say, Townshend," said one, "there's Grobleton; he was a bully. I wonder if that's his wife. Who's this? The Duke of Agincourt. He wasn't an Eton fellow? Yes, he was. He was called Poictiers then. Oh! Ah! his name is in the upper school, very large, under Charles Fox. I say, Townshend, did you see Saville's turban? What was it made of? He says his mother brought it from Grand Cairo. Didn't he just look the Saracen's Head! Here are some Dons. That's Hallam! We'll give him a cheer. I say, Townshend, look at this fellow. He does not think small beer of himself. I wonder who he is. The Duke of Wellington's valet, come to say his master is engaged. Oh! by Jove, he heard you. I wonder if the Duke will come. Won't we give him a cheer!"

"By Jove, who is this?" exclaimed Townshend, and he jumped from the wall, and followed by his companions rushed towards the road.

Two britskas, each drawn by four grey horses of mettle, and each accompanied by outriders as well mounted, were advancing at a rapid rate along the road that leads from Slough to the College. But they were destined to an irresistible check. About fifty yards before the gate that leads

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into Weston's yard, a ruthless but splendid Albanian, in crimson and gold embroidered jacket, and snowy camese, started forward, and holding out his silver-sheathed yataghan, commanded the postilions to stop. A Peruvian Inca on the other side of the road gave a simultaneous command, and would infallibly have transfixed the outriders with an arrow from his unerring bow, had they for an instant hesitated. The Albanian Chief then advanced to the door of the carriage, which he opened, and in a tone of great courtesy, announced that he was under the necessity of troubling the inmates for "salt." There was no delay. The Lord of the equipage, with the amiable condescension of a *grand monarque*, expressed his hope that the collection would be an ample one, and, as an old Etonian, placed in the hands of the Albanian his contribution, a magnificent purse furnished for the occasion and heavy with gold.

"Don't be alarmed, ladies," said a very handsome young officer, laughing and taking off his cocked hat.

"Ah!" exclaimed one of the ladies, turning at the voice, and starting a little. "Ah! it is Mr Coningsby."

Lord Eskdale paid the salt for the next carriage. "Do they come down pretty stiff?" he enquired, and then pulling forth a roll of banknotes from the pocket of his pea-jacket, he wished them good-morning.

... Music sounded in the quadrangle of the College in which the boys were already quickly assembling. The Duke of Wellington had arrived, and the boys were cheering a hero who was also an Eton field-marshall. From an oriel window in one of the Provost's rooms, Lord Monmouth, surrounded by every circumstance that could make life delightful, watched with some intentness the scene in the quadrangle beneath.

"I would give his fame," said Lord Monmouth; "if I had it, and my wealth—to be sixteen."

Five hundred of the youth of England, sparkling with

A COUNTRY NIGHT-SCHOOL

health, high spirits, and fancy dresses, were now assembled in the quadrangle. They formed into rank, and headed by a band of the Guards, thrice they marched round the court. Then, quitting the College, they commenced their progress *ad Montem*. It was a brilliant spectacle to see them defiling through the Playing Fields; those bowery meads; the river sparkling in the sun; the castled heights of Windsor; their glorious landscape; behind them the pinnacles of their College.

The road from Eton to Salt Hill was clogged with carriages; the broad fields as far as eye could range were covered with human beings. Amid the burst of martial music and the shouts of the multitude the band of heroes, as if they were marching from Athens or Thebes or Sparta to some heroic deed, encircled the mount; the ensign reaches its summit, and then amid a deafening cry of "*Floreat Etona!*" he unfurls and thrice waves the consecrated standard!

From "Coningsby"

A COUNTRY NIGHT-SCHOOL

GEORGE ELIOT

IT was a sort of scene that Adam had beheld almost weekly for years; he knew by heart every arabesque flourish in the framed specimen of Bartle Massey's handwriting which hung over the schoolmaster's head, by way of keeping a lofty ideal before the minds of his pupils; he knew the backs of all the books on the shelf running along the whitewashed wall above the pegs for the slates; he knew exactly how many grains were gone out of the ear of Indian corn that hung from one of the rafters; he had long ago exhausted the resources of his imagination in trying to think how the bunch of leathery sea-weed had looked and grown in its native element; and from the place where he sat, he could make nothing of the

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old map of England that hung against the opposite wall, for age had turned it of a fine yellow brown, something like that of a well-seasoned *meerschaum*. The drama that was going on was almost as familiar as the scene, nevertheless habit had not made him indifferent to it, and even in his present self-absorbed mood Adam felt a momentary stirring of the old fellow-feeling, as he looked at the rough men painfully holding pen or pencil with their cramped hands, or humbly labouring through their reading lesson.

The reading class now seated on the form in front of the schoolmaster's desk consisted of the three most backward pupils. . . .

"Nay, Bill, nay," Bartle was saying in a kind tone, as he nodded to Adam; "begin that again, and then perhaps it'll come to you what *d*, *r*, *y*, spells. It's the same lesson you read last week, you know."

"Bill" was a sturdy fellow, aged four-and-twenty, an excellent stone-sawyer, who could get as good wages as any man in the trade of his years; but he found a reading lesson in words of one syllable a harder matter to deal with than the hardest stone he had ever had to saw. The letters, he complained, were so "uncommon alike, there was no tellin' 'em one from another," the sawyer's business not being concerned with minute differences such as exist between a letter with its tail turned up, and a letter with its tail turned down. But Bill had a firm determination that he would learn to read, founded chiefly on two reasons: first, that Tom Hazelow, his cousin, could read anything "right off," whether it was print or writing, and Tom had sent him a letter from twenty miles off, saying how he was prospering in the world, and had got an overlooker's place; secondly, that Sam Phillips, who sawed with him, had learned to read when he was turned twenty; and what could be done by a little fellow like Sam Phillips, Bill considered, could be done by himself, seeing that he could pound Sam Phillips into wet

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clay if circumstances required it. So here he was, pointing his big finger towards three words at once, and turning his head on one side that he might keep better hold with his eye of the one word which was to be discriminated out of the group. The amount of knowledge Bartle' Massey must possess was something so dim and vast that Bill's imagination recoiled before it: he would hardly have ventured to deny that the schoolmaster might have something to do in bringing about the regular return of daylight and the changes in the weather.

The man seated next to Bill was of a very different type: he was a Methodist brick-maker, who, after spending thirty years of his life in perfect satisfaction with his ignorance, had lately "got religion," and along with it the desire to read the Bible.

. . . The third beginner was a much more promising pupil. He was a tall but thin and wiry man, nearly as old as Brimstone [the Methodist], with a very pale face, and hands stained a deep blue. He was a dyer, who, in the course of dipping homespun wool and old women's petticoats, had got fired with the ambition to learn a great deal more about the strange secrets of colour. He had already a high reputation in the district for his dyes, and he was bent on discovering some method by which he could reduce the expense of crimsons and scarlets. The druggist at Treddleston had given him a notion that he might save himself a great deal of labour and expense if he could learn to read, and so he had begun to give his spare hours to the night-school, resolving that his "little chap" should lose no time in coming to Mr Massey's day-school as soon as he was old enough.

It was touching to see these three big men, with the marks of their hard labour about them, anxiously bending over the worn books, and painfully making out "The grass is green," "The sticks are dry," "The corn is ripe"—a very hard lesson to pass to after columns of single words all alike except in the first letter. It was almost as if three rough animals were making humble efforts to learn how they might become

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human. And it touched the tenderest fibre in Bartle Massey's nature, for such full-grown children as these were the only pupils for whom he had no severe epithets, and no impatient tones. He was not gifted with an imperturbable temper, and on music-nights it was apparent that patience could never be an easy virtue to him; but this evening, as he glances over his spectacles at Bill Downes, the sawyer, who is turning his head on one side with a desperate sense of blankness before the letters *d*, *r*, *y*, his eyes shed their mildest and most encouraging light.

After the reading class, two youths, between sixteen and nineteen, came up with imaginary bills of parcels which they had been writing out on their slates, and were now required to calculate 'off-hand'—a test which they stood with such imperfect success that Bartle Massey, whose eyes had been glaring at them ominously through his spectacles for some minutes, at length burst out in a bitter, high-pitched tone, pausing between every sentence to rap the floor with a knobbed stick which rested between his legs.

"Now, you see, you don't do this thing a bit better than you did a fortnight ago; and I'll tell you what's the reason. You want to learn accounts; that's well and good. But you think all you need do to learn accounts is to come to me and do sums for an hour or so, two or three times a week; and no sooner do you get your caps on and turn out of doors again, than you sweep the whole thing clean out of your mind. You go whistling about and take no more care what you're thinking of than if your heads were gutters for any rubbish to swill through that happened to be in the way; and if you get a good notion in 'em it's pretty soon washed out again. You think knowledge is to be got cheap—you'll come and pay Bartle Massey sixpence a week, and he'll make you clever at figures without your taking any trouble. But knowledge isn't to be got with paying sixpence, let me tell you: if you're to know figures, you must turn 'em over

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in your own heads, and keep your thoughts fixed on 'em. There's nothing you can't turn into a sum, for there's nothing but what's got number in it—even a fool. You may say to yourselves, 'I'm one fool, and Jack's another; if my fool's head weighed four pound, and Jack's three pound three ounces and three-quarters, how many pennyweights heavier would my head be than Jack's?' A man that's got his heart in learning figures would make sums for himself and work 'em in his head: when he sat at his shoemaking, he'd count his stitches by fives, and then put a price on his stitches, say half a farthing, and then see how much money he could get in an hour; and then ask himself how much money he'd get in a day at that rate; and then how much ten workmen would get working three or twenty or a hundred years at that rate—and all the while his needle would be going just as fast as if he'd left his head empty for the devil to dance in. But the long and short of it is—I'll have no one in my night-school that doesn't strive to learn what he comes to learn, as hard as if he was striving to get out of a dark hole into broad daylight. I'll send no man away because he's stupid: if Billy Taft, the idiot, wanted to learn anything, I'd not refuse to teach him. But I'll not throw away good knowledge on people who think they can get it by the sixpenn'orth, and carry it away with 'em as they would an ounce of snuff. So never come to me again, if you can't show that you've been working with your own heads, instead of thinking you can pay for mine to work for you. That's the last word I've got to say to you."

With this final sentence, Bartle Massey gave a sharper rap than ever with his knobbed stick, and the discomfited lads got up to go with a sulky look. The other pupils had happily only their writing books to show, in various stages of progress from pot-hooks to round text; and mere pen-strokes, however perverse, were less exasperating to Bartle than false arithmetic. He was a little more severe than usual on Jacob

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Storey's *z*'s, of which poor Jacob had written a pagesful, all with their tops turned the wrong way, with a puzzled sense that they were not right "somehow." But he observed in apology, that it was a letter you never wanted hardly, and he thought it had only been put there "to finish off th' alphabet, like, though ampus-and (&) would ha' done as well, for what he could see."

At last the pupils had all taken their hats and said their "Good-nights," and Adam, knowing his old master's habits, rose and said, "Shall I put the candles out, Mr Massey?"

From "*Adam Bede*"

LOWOOD SCHOOL

CHARLOTTE BRONTE

Miss MILLER was ruddy in complexion, though of a care-worn countenance; hurried in gait and action, like one who had always a multiplicity of tasks on hand; she looked, indeed, what I afterwards found she really was, an under-teacher. Led by her, I passed from compartment to compartment, from passage to passage of a large and irregular building; till, emerging from the total and somewhat dreary silence of that portion of the house we had traversed, we came upon the hum of many voices, and presently entered a wide, long room, with great deal tables, two at each end, on each of which burned a pair of candles, and seated all round on benches a congregation of girls of every age, from nine or ten to twenty. Seen by the dim light of the dips, their number to me seemed countless, though not in reality exceeding eighty; they were uniformly dressed in brown stuff frocks of quaint fashion and long holland pinafores. It was the hour of study; they were engaged in conning over their to-morrow's task, and the hum I had heard was the combined result of their whispered repetitions.

LOWOOD SCHOOL

Miss Miller signed to me to sit on a bench near the door, then walking up to the top of the long room she cried out:

"Monitors, collect the lesson-books and put them away!"

Four tall girls arose from different tables, and going round, gathered the books and removed them. Miss Miller again gave the word of command:

"Monitors, fetch the supper-trays!"

The tall girls went out and returned presently, each bearing a tray, with portions of something, I knew not what, arranged thereon, and a pitcher of water and a mug in the middle of each tray. The portions were handed round; those who liked took a draught of the water, the mug being common to all. When it came to my turn, I drank, for I was thirsty, but did not touch the food, excitement and fatigue rendering me incapable of eating: I now saw, however, that it was a thin oaten cake shared into fragments.

The meal over, prayers were read by Miss Miller, and the classes filed off, two and two, upstairs. Overpowered by this time with weariness, I scarcely noticed what sort of a place the bedroom was, except that, like the schoolroom, I saw it was very long. To-night I was to be Miss Miller's bedfellow; she helped me to undress. When laid down I glanced at the long rows of beds, each of which was quickly filled with two occupants; in ten minutes the single light was extinguished, and amidst silence and complete darkness I fell asleep.

The night passed rapidly: I was too tired even to dream; I only once awoke to hear the wind rave in furious gusts, and the rain fall in torrents, and to be sensible that Miss Miller had taken her place by my side. When I again unclosed my eyes, a loud bell was ringing; the girls were up and dressing; day had not yet begun to dawn, and a rush-light or two burned in the room. I too rose reluctantly; it was bitter cold, and I dressed as well as I could for shivering, and washed when there was a basin at liberty, which did

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not occur soon, as there was but one basin to six girls, on the stands down the middle of the room. Again the bell rang: all formed in file, two and two, and in that order descended the stairs and entered the cold and dimly lit schoolroom. Here prayers were read by Miss Miller; afterwards she called out:

"Form classes!"

A great tumult succeeded for some minutes, during which Miss Miller repeatedly exclaimed, "Silence!" and "Order!" When it subsided, I saw them all drawn up in four semi-circles, before four chairs, placed at the four tables; all held books in their hands, and a great book, like a Bible, lay on each table, before the vacant seat. A pause of some seconds succeeded, filled up by the low, vague hum of numbers; Miss Miller walked from class to class, hushing this indefinite sound.

A distant bell tinkled; immediately three ladies entered the room, each walked to a table and took her seat; Miss Miller assumed the fourth vacant chair, which was that nearest the door, and around which the smallest of the children were assembled: to this inferior class I was called, and placed at the bottom of it.

Business now began; the day's Collect was repeated, then certain texts of Scripture were said, and to these succeeded a protracted reading of chapters of the Bible, which lasted an hour. By the time that exercise was terminated, day had fully dawned. The indefatigable bell now sounded for the fourth time; the classes were marshalled and marched into another room for breakfast. How glad I was to behold a prospect of getting something to eat! I was now nearly sick from inanition, having taken so little the day before.

The refectory was a great, low-ceiled, gloomy room. On two long tables smoked basins of something hot, which however, to my dismay, sent forth an odour far from inviting. I saw a universal manifestation of discontent when the fumes of the repast met the nostrils of those destined to swallow it;

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from the van of the procession, the tall girls of the first class rose the whispered words:

"Disgusting! The porridge is burnt again!"

"Silence!" ejaculated a voice, not that of Miss Miller but one of the upper teachers, a little and dark personage, smartly dressed, and of somewhat morose aspect, who installed herself at the top of one table, while a more buxom lady presided at the other. . . . Miss Miller occupied the foot of the table where I sat, and a strange, foreign-looking, elderly lady, the French teacher as I afterwards found, took the corresponding seat at the other board. A long grace was said and a hymn sung; then a servant brought in some tea for the teachers, and the meal began.

Ravenous, and now very faint, I devoured a spoonful or two of my portion without thinking of its taste; but the first edge of hunger blunted, I perceived I had got in hand a nauseous mess: burnt porridge is almost as bad as rotten potatoes; famine itself soon sickens over it. The spoons were moved slowly: I saw each girl taste her food and try to swallow it; but in each case the effort was soon relinquished. Breakfast was over, and none had breakfasted. Thanks being returned for what we had not got, and a second hymn chanted, the refectory was evacuated for the schoolroom. I was one of the last to go out, and in passing the tables, I saw one teacher take one of the basins of porridge and taste it; she looked at the others; all their countenances expressed displeasure; and one of them, the stout one, whispered:

"Abominable stuff! How shameful!"

A quarter of an hour passed before lessons began, during which the schoolroom was in a glorious tumult; for that space of time it seemed to be permitted to talk loud and more freely, and they used their privilege. The whole conversation ran on the breakfast, which one and all abused roundly. Poor things! it was the sole consolation they had. Miss Miller was now the only teacher in the room; a group of

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great girls standing around her spoke with sullen and serious gestures. . . .

A clock in the schoolroom struck nine; Miss Miller left the circle, and standing in the middle of the room, cried:

"Silence! To your seats!"

Discipline prevailed: in five minutes the confused throng was resolved into order, and comparative silence quelled the Babel clamour of tongues. The upper teachers now punctually resumed their posts; but still all seemed to wait. Ranged on benches down the sides of the room, the eighty girls sat motionless and erect: a quaint assemblage they appeared, all with plain locks combed from their faces, not a curl visible; in brown dresses, made high and surrounded by a narrow tucker about the throat, with little pockets of holland (shaped something like a Highlander's purse) tied in front of their frocks, and destined to serve the purpose of a work-bag; all, too, wearing woollen stockings and country-made shoes, fastened with brass buckles. About twenty of those clad in this costume were full-grown girls, or rather young women; it suited them ill, and gave an air of oddity even to the prettiest.

. . . As my eye wandered from face to face, the whole school rose simultaneously, as if moved by a common spring.

. . . Ere I had gathered my wits, the classes were again seated; but as all eyes were now turned to one point, mine followed the general direction, and encountered the personage who had received me last night. She stood at the bottom of the long room, on the hearth; for there was a fire at each end: she surveyed the two rows of girls silently and gravely. Miss Miller, approaching, seemed to ask her a question, and having received her answer, went back to her place, and said aloud:

"Monitor of the first class, fetch the globes!"

While the direction was being executed, the lady consulted moved slowly up the room. I suppose I have a considerable organ of veneration, for I retain yet the sense of admiring awe with which my eye traced her steps. Seen now, in broad

LOWOOD SCHOOL

daylight, she looked tall, fair, and shapely; brown eyes with a benignant light in their irids, and a fine pencilling of long ^{luscious} lashes round, relieved the whiteness of her large front; on each of her temples, her hair of a very dark brown, was clustered in round curls, according to the fashion of those times, when neither smooth bands nor long ringlets were in vogue; her dress, also in the mode of the day, was of purple cloth, relieved by a sort of Spanish trimming of black velvet; a gold watch (watches were not so common then as now) shone at her girdle. . . .

The superintendent of Lowood (for such was this lady), having taken her seat before a pair of globes placed on one of the tables, summoned the first class round her, and commenced giving a lesson in geography. The lower classes were called by the teachers: repetitions in history, grammar, etc., went on for an hour; writing and arithmetic succeeded; and music lessons were given by Miss Temple to some of the elder girls. The duration of each lesson was measured by the clock, which at last struck twelve. The superintendent rose:

"I have a word to address to the pupils," said she.

The tumult of cessation from lessons was already breaking forth, but it sank at her voice. She went on:

"You had this morning a breakfast which you could not eat; you must be hungry: I have ordered that a lunch of bread and cheese shall be served to all."

The teachers looked at her with a sort of surprise.

"It is to be done on my responsibility," she added, in an explanatory tone to them, and immediately afterwards left the room.

The bread and cheese were presently brought in and distributed, to the high delight and refreshment of the whole school. The order was now given, "To the garden!" Each put on a coarse straw bonnet, with strings of coloured calico, and a cloak of grey frieze. I was similarly equipped, and, following the stream, I made my way into the open air.

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The garden was a wide enclosure, surrounded with walls so high as to exclude every glimpse of prospect; a covered verandah ran down one side, and broad walks bordered a middle space, divided into scores of little beds: these beds were assigned as gardens for the pupils to cultivate, and each bed had an owner. When full of flowers, they would doubtless look pretty; but, now, at the latter end of January, all was wintry blight and brown decay. I shuddered as I stood and looked round me. It was an inclement day for outdoor exercise; not positively rainy, but darkened by a drizzling yellow fog; all underfoot was still soaking wet with the floods of yesterday. The stronger among the girls ran about and engaged in active games, but sundry pale and thin ones herded together for shelter and warmth in the verandah; and among these, as the dense mist penetrated to their shivering frames, I heard frequently the sound of a hollow cough.

. . . I looked round the convent-like garden, and then up at the house—a large building, half of which seemed grey and old, the other half quite new. The new part, containing the school-room and dormitory, was lit by mullioned and latticed windows, which gave it a church-like aspect; a stone tablet over the door bore this inscription:

LOWOOD INSTITUTION

THIS PORTION WAS REBUILT A.D. —, BY NAOMI BROCKLEHURST,
OF BROCKLEHURST HALL, IN THIS COUNTY.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

St Matt., v, 16

. . . “Can you tell me what the writing on that stone over the door means? What is Lowood Institution?”

“This house where you are come to live.”

“And why do they call it Institution? Is it in any way different from other schools?”

LOWOOD SCHOOL

"It is partly a charity-school: you and I, and all the rest of us, are charity-children." . . .

"Do we pay no money? Do they keep us for nothing?"

"We pay, or our friends pay, fifteen pounds a year for each."

"Then why do they call us charity-children?"

"Because fifteen pounds is not enough for board and teaching, and the deficiency is supplied by subscription."

"Who subscribes?"

"Different benevolent-minded ladies and gentlemen in this neighbourhood and in London."

"Who was Naomi Brocklehurst?"

"The lady who built the new part of this house, as that tablet records, and whose son overlooks and directs everything here." . . .

But at that moment the summons sounded for dinner; all re-entered the house. The odour which now filled the refectory was scarcely more appetising than that which had regaled our nostrils at breakfast: the dinner was served in two huge tin-plated vessels, whence rose a strong steam redolent of rancid fat. I found the mess to consist of indifferent potatoes and strange shreds of rusty meat, mixed and cooked together. Of this preparation a tolerably abundant plateful was apportioned to each pupil. I ate what I could, and wondered within myself whether every day's fare would be like this.

After dinner, we immediately adjourned to the school-room; lessons recommenced, and were continued till five o'clock. . . . Soon after 5 P.M. we had another meal, consisting of a small mug of coffee, and half a slice of brown bread. I devoured my bread and drank my coffee with relish, but I should have been glad of as much more—I was still hungry. Half an hour's recreation succeeded, then study; then the glass of water and the piece of oat-cake, prayers, and bed. Such was my first day at Lowood.

From "Jane Eyre"

PARTIES AND AMUSEMENTS A STRAWBERRY PARTY

JANE AUSTEN

IT was now the middle of June, and the weather fine; and Mrs Elton was growing impatient to name the day [for a picnic to Box Hill], and settle with Mr Weston as to pigeon-pies and cold lamb, when a lame carriage horse threw everything into sad uncertainty. It might be weeks, it might be only a few days, before the horse was usable; but no preparations could be ventured on, and it was all melancholy stagnation. Mrs Elton's resources were inadequate to such an attack.

"Is not this most excruciating, Knightley?" she cried; "and such weather for exploring! These delays and disappointments are quite odious. What are we to do? The year will wear away at this rate, and nothing done. Before this time last year, I assure you, we had a delightful exploring party from Maple Grove to King's Weston."

"You had better explore to Donwell," replied Mr. Knightley. "That may be done without horses. Come and eat my strawberries: they are ripening fast."

If Mr Knightley did not begin seriously, he was obliged to proceed so, for his proposal was caught at with delight, and the "Oh! I should like it of all things," was not plainer in words than in manner. Denwell was famous for its strawberry beds, which seemed a plea for the invitation. But no plea was necessary: cabbage beds would have been enough to tempt the lady, who only wanted to be going somewhere. She promised him again and again to come—much oftener than he doubted—and was extremely gratified by such a

A STRAWBERRY PARTY

proof of intimacy, such a distinguishing compliment, as she chose to consider it.

"You may depend upon me," said she; "I will certainly come. Name your day, and I will come. You will allow me to bring Jane Fairfax?"

"I cannot name a day," said he, "till I have spoken to some others, whom I would wish to meet you."

"Oh, leave all that to me; only give me a *carte Blanche*. I am lady patroness, you know. It is my party, I will bring friends with me."

"I hope you will bring Elton," said he, "but I will not trouble you to give any other invitations."

"Oh, now you are looking very sly; but, consider, you need not be afraid of delegating power to me. I am no young lady on her presentment. Married women, you know, may be safely authorized. It is my party. Leave it all to me. I will invite your guests."

"No," he calmly replied, "there is but one married woman in the world whom I can ever allow to invite what guests she pleases to Donwell, and that one is——"

"Mrs Weston, I suppose," interrupted Mrs Elton, rather mortified.

"No—Mrs Knightley; and till she is in being, I will manage such matters myself."

"Ah, you are an odd creature!" she cried, satisfied to have no one preferred to herself. "You are a humourist, and may say what you like—quite a humourist. Well, I shall bring Jane with me—Jane and her aunt. The rest I leave to you. I have no objections at all to meeting the Hartfield family. Don't scruple; I know you are attached to them."

"You certainly will meet them, if I can prevail; and I shall call on Miss Bates on my way home."

"That is quite unnecessary; I see Jane every day. But as you like. It is to be a simple morning scheme, you know,

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Knightley,—quite a simple thing. I shall wear a large bonnet, and bring one of my little baskets, hanging on my arm. Here—probably this basket with pink ribbon. Nothing can be more simple, you see. And Jane will have such another. There is to be no form or parade—a sort of gipsy party. We are to walk about your gardens, and gather strawberries ourselves, and sit under trees; and whatever else you like to provide, it is to be all out of doors—a table spread in the shade, you know—everything as natural and simple as possible. Is not that your idea?"

"Not quite. My idea of the simple and natural will be to have the table spread in the dining-room. The nature and simplicity of gentlemen and ladies with their servants and furniture I think is best observed by meals within doors. When you are tired of eating strawberries in the garden, there shall be cold meat in the house."

"Well, as you please; only don't have a great set-out. And, hy-the-bye, can I or my housekeeper be of any use to you with our opinion? Pray be sincere, Knightley. If you wish me to talk to Mrs Hedges, or to inspect anything—"

"I have not the least wish for it, I thank you."

"Well, but if any difficulties should arise, my housekeeper is extremely clever."

"I will answer for it that mine thinks herself full as clever, and would spurn anybody's assistance."

"I wish we had a donkey. The thing would be for us all to come on donkeys—Jane, Miss Bates, and me, and my *caro sposo* walking by. I really must talk to him about purchasing a donkey. In a country life I conceive it to be a sort of necessity; for let a woman have ever so many resources, it is not possible for her to be always shut up at home; and very long walks, you know—in summer there is dust, and in winter there is dirt."

"You will not find either between Donwell and Highbury. Donwell Lane is never dusty, and now it is perfectly

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Emma and Harriet professed very great expectations of pleasure from it; and Mr Weston, unasked, promised to get Frank over to join them if possible—a proof of approbation and gratitude which could have been dispensed with. Mr Knightley was then obliged to say that he should be glad to see him; and Mr Weston engaged to lose no time in writing, and spare no arguments to induce him to come.

In the meantime the lame horse recovered so fast that the party to Box Hill was again under happy consideration; and at last Donwell was settled for one day, and Box Hill for the next, the weather appearing exactly right.

Under a bright midday sun, at almost midsummer, Mr Woodhouse was safely conveyed in his carriage, with one window down, to partake of this *al fresco* party; and in one of the most comfortable rooms in the Abbey, especially prepared for him by a fire all the morning, he was happily placed, quite at his ease, ready to talk with pleasure of what had been achieved, and advise everybody to come and sit down, and not to heat themselves. Mrs Weston, who seemed to have walked there on purpose to be tired, and sit all the time with him, remained, when all the others were invited or persuaded out, his patient listener and sympathizer.

It was so long since Emma had been at the Abbey, that as soon as she was satisfied of her father's comfort, she was glad to leave him, and look around her—eager to refresh and correct her memory with more particular observation, more exact understanding of a house and grounds that must ever be so interesting to her and all her family.

She felt all the honest pride and complacency which her alliance with the present and future proprietor could fairly warrant, as she viewed the respectable size and style of the building—its suitable, becoming, characteristic situation, low and sheltered; its ample garden, stretching down to a meadow washed by a stream, of which the Abbey, with all the old neglect of prospect, had scarcely a sight, and its abundance of

A STRAWBERRY PARTY

timber, in rows and avenues, which neither fashion, nor extravagance, had rooted up. The house was larger than Hartfield, and totally unlike it, covering a good deal of ground, rambling and irregular, with many comfortable, and one or two handsome rooms. It was just what it ought to be, and it looked what it was; and Emma felt an increasing respect for it, as the residence of a family of such true gentility, untainted in blood and in understanding.

Some faults of temper John Knightley had, but Isabella had connected herself unexceptionably. She had given them neither men, nor names, nor places that could raise a blush. These were pleasant feelings, and she walked about and indulged them till it was necessary to do as the others did, and collect round the strawberry beds. The whole party were assembled, except Frank Churchill, who was expected every moment from Richmond; and Mrs Elton, in all her apparatus of happiness, her large bonnet and her basket, was very ready to lead the way, in gathering, accepting, or talking. Strawberries, and only strawberries, could now be thought or spoken of.

"The best fruit in England—everybody's favourite—always wholesome. These the finest beds and finest sorts. Delightful to gather for oneself—the only way of really enjoying them. Morning decidedly the best time—never tired—every sort good—hautboy infinitely superior—no comparison—the others hardly eatable—hautboys very scarce—Chile preferred—white wood finest flavour of all—price of strawberries in London—abundance about Bristol—Maple Grove—cultivation—beds when to be renewed—gardeners thinking exactly different—no general rule—gardeners never to be put out of their way—delicious fruit—only too rich to be eaten much of—inferior to cherries—currants more refreshing—only objection to gathering strawberries the stooping—glaring sun—tired to death—could bear it no longer—must go and sit in the shade."

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Such, for half an hour was the conversation, interrupted only once by Mrs Weston, who came out, in her solicitude after her son-in-law, to inquire if he were come. And she was a little uneasy. She had some fears of his horse.

Seats tolerably in the shade were found; and now Emma was obliged to overhear what Mrs Elton and Jane Fairfax were talking of. A situation, a most desirable situation was in question. Mrs Elton had received notice of it only that morning, and was in raptures. It was not with Mrs Suckling, it was not with Mrs Bragge, but in felicity and splendour it fell short only of them: it was with a cousin of Mrs Bragge, an acquaintance of Mrs Suckling, a lady known at Maple Grove. Delightful, charming, superior, first circles, spheres, lines, ranks, everything; and Mrs Elton was wild to have the offer closed with immediately. On her side all was warmth, energy, and triumph; and she positively refused to take her friend's negative, though Miss Fairfax continued to assure her that she would not at present engage in anything—repeating the same motives that she had been heard to urge before. Still Mrs Elton insisted on being authorized to write an acquiescence by the morning's post. How Jane could bear it at all was astonishing to Emma. She did look vexed; she did speak pointedly; and at last, with a decision of action unusual to her, proposed a removal. "Should not they walk? Would not Mr Knightley show them the gardens—all the gardens? She wished to see the whole extent." The pertinacity of her friend seemed more than she could bear.

It was hot, and after walking some time over the gardens in a scattered, dispersed way, scarcely any three together, they insensibly followed one another to the delicious shade of a broad short avenue of limes, which, stretching beyond the garden at an equal distance from the river, seemed the finish of the pleasure grounds. It led to nothing—nothing but a view at the end over a low stone wall with high pillars,

AN EVENING PARTY AT CRANFORD

which seemed intended in their erection, to give the appearance of an approach to the house, which never had been there. Disputable, however, as might be the taste of such a termination, it was in itself a charming walk, and the view which closed it extremely pretty. The considerable slope, at nearly the foot of which the Abbey stood, gradually acquired a steeper form beyond its grounds; and, at half a mile distant was a bank of considerable abruptness and grandeur, well clothed with wood; and at the bottom of this bank, favourably placed and sheltered, rose the Abbey Mill Farm, with meadows in front, and the river making a close and handsome curve around it.

It was a sweet view—sweet to the eye and the mind: English verdure, English culture, English comfort, seen under a sun bright without being oppressive.

From "Emma"

AN EVENING PARTY AT CRANFORD

E. C. GASKELL

CARD-TABLES, with green-baize tops, were set out by daylight, just as usual; it was the third week in November, so the evenings closed in about four. Candles and clean packs of cards were arranged on each table. The fire was made up; the neat maid-servant had received her last directions; and there we stood, dressed in our best, each with a candle-lighter in her hands, ready to dart at the candles as soon as the first knock came. Parties in Cranford were solemn festivities, making the ladies feel gravely elated as they sat together in their best dresses. As soon as three had arrived, we sat down to "Preference," I being the unlucky fourth. The next four comers were put down immediately to another table; and presently the tea-trays, which I had seen set out in the storeroom as I passed in the morning, were placed each

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on the middle of a card-table. The china was delicate egg-shell; the old-fashioned silver glittered with polishing; but the eatables were of the slightest description. While the trays were yet on the tables, Captain and the Miss Browns came in; and I could see that, somehow or other, the Captain was a favourite with all the ladies present. Ruffled brows were smoothed, sharp voices lowered at his approach. Miss Brown looked ill, and depressed almost to gloom. Miss Jessie smiled as usual, and seemed nearly as popular as her father. He immediately and quietly assumed the man's place in the room; attended to every one's wants, lessened the pigmy servant-maid's labour by waiting on empty cups and bread-and-butterless ladies; and yet did it all in so easy and dignified a manner, and so much as if it were a matter of course for the strong to attend to the weak, that he was a true man throughout. He played for threepenny points with as grave an interest as if they had been pounds; and yet, in all his attentions to strangers, he had an eye on his suffering daughter—for suffering I was sure she was, though to many eyes she might only appear to be irritable. Miss Jessie could not play cards: but she talked to the sitters-out, who, before her coming, had been rather inclined to be cross. She sang, too, to an old cracked piano, which I think had been a spinnet in its youth. Miss Jessie sang *Jock of Hazeldean* a little out of tune; but we were none of us musical, though Miss Jenkyns beat time, out of time, by way of appearing to be so.

It was very good of Miss Jenkyns to do this; for I had seen that, a little before, she had been a good deal annoyed by Miss Jessie Brown's unguarded admission (*à propos* of Shetland wool) that she had an uncle, her mother's brother, who was a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. Miss Jenkyns tried to drown this confession by a terrible cough—for the Honourable Mrs Jamieson was sitting at the card-table nearest Miss Jessie, and what would she say or think if she found out that

AN EVENING PARTY AT CRANFORD

she was in the same room with a shopkeeper's niece! But Miss Jessie Brown (who had no tact, as we all agreed next morning) *would* repeat the information, and assure Miss Pole she could easily get her the identical Shetland wool required, "through my uncle, who has the best assortment of Shetland goods of anyone in Edinbro'."

It was to take the taste of this out of our mouths, and the sound of this out of our ears, that Miss Jenkyns proposed music; so, I say again, it was very good of her to beat time to the song.

When the trays reappeared with biscuits and wine, punctually at a quarter to nine, there was conversation, comparing of cards, and talking over tricks; but, by-and-by, Captain Brown sported a bit of literature.

"Have you seen any numbers of *The Pickwick Papers*?" said he. (They were then publishing in parts.) "Capital thing!"

Now Miss Jenkyns was the daughter of a deceased rector of Cranford; and, on the strength of a number of manuscript sermons and a pretty good library of divinity, considered herself literary; and looked upon any conversation about books as a challenge to her. So she answered and said, "Yes, she had seen them; indeed she might say she had read them."

"And what do you think of them?" exclaimed Captain Brown. "Aren't they famously good?"

So urged Miss Jenkyns could not but speak.

"I must say, I don't think they are by any means equal to Dr Johnson. Still, perhaps the author is young. Let him persevere, and who knows what he may become if he will take the great Doctor for his model." This was evidently too much for Captain Brown to take placidly; and I saw the words on the tip of his tongue before Miss Jenkyns had finished her sentence.

"It's quite a different sort of thing, my dear madam," he began.

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"I am quite aware of that," returned she. "And I make allowances, Captain Brown."

"Just allow me to read you a scene out of this month's number," pleaded he. "I had it only this morning, and I don't think the company can have read it yet."

"As you please," said she, settling herself with an air of resignation. He read the account of the 'swarry' which Sam Weller gave at Bath. Some of us laughed heartily. I did not dare, because I was staying in the house. Miss Jenkyns sat in patient gravity. When it was ended, she turned to me, and said, with mild dignity,

"Fetch me *Rasselas*, my dear, out of the book-room."

When I brought it to her, she turned to Captain Brown:

"Now allow me to read you a scene, and then the company can judge between your favourite, Mr Boz, and Dr Johnson."

She read one of the conversations between Rasselas and Imlac in a high-pitched majestic voice; and when she had ended, she said, "I imagine I am now justified in my preference of Dr Johnson as a writer of fiction." The captain screwed his lips up, and drummed on the table, but he did not speak. She thought she would give a finishing blow or two.

"I consider it vulgar, and below the dignity of literature, to publish in numbers."

"How was *The Rambler* published, ma'am?" asked Captain Brown, in a low voice which I think Miss Jenkyns could not have heard.

"Dr Johnson's style is a model for young beginners. My father recommended it to me, when I began to write letters. I have formed my own style upon it; I recommend it to your favourite."

"I should be very sorry for him to exchange his style for any such pompous writing," said Captain Brown.

Miss Jenkyns felt this as a personal affront, in a way of which the Captain never dreamed. Epistolary writing she

THE BATH ASSEMBLY-ROOMS

and her friends considered as her *serte*. Many a copy of many a letter have I seen written and corrected on the slate before she "seized the half-hour just previous to post-time to assure" her friends of this or that; and Dr Johnson was, as she said, her model in these compositions. She drew herself up with dignity, and only replied to Captain Brown's last remark by saying with marked emphasis on every syllable, "I prefer Dr Johnson to Mr Boz."

It is said—I won't vouch for the fact—that Captain Brown was heard to say, *sotto voce*, "D—n Dr Johnson!" If he did, he was penitent afterwards, as he showed by going to stand by Miss Jenkyns' arm-chair, and endeavouring to beguile her into conversation on some more pleasing subject. But she was inexorable.

From "Cranford"

THE BATH ASSEMBLY-ROOMS

JANE AUSTEN

The important evening came which was to usher her into the Upper Rooms. Her hair was cut and dressed by the best hand, her clothes put on with care, and both Mrs Allen and her maid declared she looked quite as she should do. With such encouragement, Catherine hoped at least to pass uncensured through the crowd; as for admiration, it was always very welcome when it came, but she did not depend on it.

Mrs Allen was so long in dressing that they did not enter the ball-room till late. The season was full, the room crowded, and the two ladies squeezed in as well as they could. As for Mr Allen, he repaired directly to the card-room, and left them to enjoy a mob by themselves. With more care for the safety of her new gown than for the comfort of her *protégée*, Mrs Allen made her way through the throng of men near the door, as swiftly as the necessary caution would

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allow; Catherine, however, kept close at her side, and linked her arm too firmly with her friend's to be torn asunder by any common effort of a struggling assembly. But, to her utter amazement, she found that to proceed along the room was by no means the way to disengage themselves from the crowd; it seemed rather to increase as they went on; whereas she had imagined that, when once fairly within the door, they should easily find seats, and be able to watch the dances with perfect convenience. But this was far from being the case; and though by unremitting diligence they gained even the top of the room, their situation was still the same; they saw nothing of the dancers but the high feathers of some of the ladies. Still they moved on, something better was yet in view, and by a continued exertion of strength and ingenuity they found themselves at last in the passage behind the highest bench. Here there was somewhat less of a crowd than below; and hence Miss Morland had a comprehensive view of all the company beneath her, and of all the dangers of her late passage through them. It was a splendid sight, and she began, for the first time that evening, to feel herself at a ball: she longed to dance, but she had not an acquaintance in the room. Mrs Allen did all she could in such a case, by saying, very placidly, every now and then, "I wish you could dance, my dear; I wish you could get a partner." For some time her young friend felt obliged to her for these wishes, but they were repeated so often, and were so totally ineffectual, that Catherine grew tired at last, and would thank her no more.

They were not long able, however, to enjoy the repose of the eminence they had so laboriously gained. Everybody was shortly in motion for tea, and they must squeeze out like the rest. Catherine began to feel something of disappointment: she was tired of being continually pressed against by people, the generality of whose faces possessed nothing to interest, and with all of whom she was so wholly unacquainted that

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she could not relieve the irksomeness of imprisonment by the exchange of a syllable with any of her fellow-captives; and when at last arrived in the tea-room, she felt yet more the awkwardness of having no party to join, no acquaintance to claim, no gentleman to assist them. They saw nothing of Mr Allen; and, after looking about them in vain for a more eligible situation, were obliged to sit down at the end of a table, at which a large party were already placed, without having anything to do there, or anyone to speak to except each other. . . .

After some time they received an offer of tea from one of their neighbours, it was thankfully accepted, and this introduced a light conversation with the gentleman who offered, which was the only time that anybody spoke to them during the evening, till they were discovered and joined by Mr Allen when the dance was over.

"Well, Miss Morland," said he directly, "I hope you have had an agreeable ball."

"Very agreeable, indeed," she replied, vainly endeavouring to hide a great yawn. . . .

Every morning now brought its regular duties; shops were to be visited, some new part of the town to be looked at, and the Pump Room to be attended, where they paraded up and down for an hour, looking at everybody and speaking to no one. The wish of a numerous acquaintance in Bath was still uppermost with Mrs Allen, and she repeated it after every fresh proof, which every morning brought, of her knowing nobody at all.

They made their appearance in the Lower Rooms, and here fortune was more favourable to our heroine. The master of the ceremonies introduced to her a very gentleman-like young man as a partner; his name was Tilney. He seemed to be about four or five and twenty, was rather tall, had a pleasing countenance, a very intelligent and lively eye, and, if not quite handsome, was very near it. His address was

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good, and Catherine felt herself in high luck. There was little leisure for speaking while they danced; but when they were seated at tea, she found him as agreeable as she had already given him credit for being. He talked with fluency and spirit, and there was an archness and pleasantry in his manner which interested, though it was hardly understood by her. After chatting some time on such matters as naturally arose from the objects around them, he suddenly addressed her with: "I have hitherto been very remiss, madam, in the proper attentions of a partner here; I have not yet asked you how long you have been in Bath, whether you were ever here before, whether you have been at the Upper Rooms, the theatre, and the concert, and how you like the place altogether. I have been very negligent; but are you now at leisure to satisfy me in these particulars? If you are, I will begin directly."

"You need not give yourself that trouble, sir."

"No trouble, I assure you, madam." Then forming his features into a set smile, and affectedly softening his voice, he added, with a simpering air, "Have you been long in Bath, madam?"

"About a week, sir," replied Catherine, trying not to laugh.

"Really!" with affected astonishment.

"Why should you be surprised, sir?"

"Why, indeed?" said he, in his natural tone; "but some emotion must appear to be raised by your reply, and surprise is more easily assumed, and not less reasonable, than any other. Now let us go on. Were you never here before, madam?"

"Never, sir."

"Indeed! Have you yet honoured the Upper Rooms?"

"Yes, sir; I was there last Monday."

"Have you been to the theatre?"

"Yes, sir; I was at the play on Tuesday."

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"To the concert?"

"Yes, sir; on Wednesday."

"And are you altogether pleased with Bath?"

"Yes; I like it very well."

"Now I must give one smirk, and then we may be rational again."

Catherine turned away her head, not knowing whether she might venture to laugh.

"I see what you think of me," said he gravely; "I shall make but a poor figure in your journal to-morrow."

"My journal!"

"I know exactly what you will say. Friday, went to the Lower Rooms; wore my sprigged muslin robe with blue trimmings, plain black shoes; appeared to much advantage, but was strangely harassed by a queer half-witted man, who would make me dance with him, and distressed me by his nonsense."

"Indeed I shall say no such thing."

"Shall I tell you what you ought to say?"

"If you please."

"I danced with a very agreeable young man, introduced by Mr King; had a great deal of conversation with him; seems a most extraordinary genius; hope I may hear more of him. That, madam, is what I wish you to say."

"But perhaps I keep no journal."

"Perhaps you are not sitting in this room, and I am not sitting by you. These are points in which a doubt is equally possible. Not keep a journal! How are your absent cousins to understand the tenor of your life in Bath without one? How are the civilities and compliments of every day to be related as they ought to be unless noted down every evening in a journal? How are your various dresses to be remembered, and the particular state of your complexion, and curl of your hair to be described, in all their diversities, without having recourse to a journal? My dear madam,

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I am not so ignorant of young ladies' ways as you wish to believe me. It is this delightful habit of journalizing which largely contributes to form the easy style of writing for which ladies are so celebrated. Everybody allows that the talent of writing agreeable letters is peculiarly female. Nature may have done something, but I am sure it must be essentially assisted by the practice of keeping a journal."

"I have sometimes thought," said Catherine doubtfully, "whether ladies *do* write so much better letters than gentlemen. That is, I should not think the superiority was always on our side."

"As far as I have had opportunity of judging, it appears to me that the usual style of letter-writing among women is faultless, except in three particulars."

"And what are they?"

"A general deficiency of subject, a total inattention to stops, and a very frequent ignorance of grammar."

"Upon my word, I need not have been afraid of disclaiming the compliment! You do think too highly of us in that way."

"I should no more lay it down as a general rule that women write better letters than men, than that they sing better duets, or draw better landscapes. In every power of which taste is the foundation, excellence is pretty fairly divided between the sexes."

They were interrupted by Mrs Allen. "My dear Catherine," said she, "do take this pin out of my sleeve. I am afraid it has torn a hole already. I shall be quite sorry if it has, for this is a favourite gown, though it cost but nine shillings a yard."

"That is exactly what I should have guessed it, madam," said Mr Tilney, looking at the muslin.

"Do you understand muslins, sir?"

"Particularly well; I always buy my own cravats, and am allowed to be an excellent judge; and my sister has often

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with the foibles of others. "What are you thinking of so earnestly?" said he, as they walked back to the ball-room; "not of your partner, I hope, for, by that shake of the head, your meditations are not satisfactory."

Catherine coloured, and said, "I was not thinking of anything."

"That is artful and deep, to be sure; but I had rather be told at once that you will not tell me."

"Well, then, I will not."

"Thank you, for now we shall soon be acquainted, as I am authorized to tease you on this subject whenever we meet, and nothing in the world advances intimacy so much."

They danced again; and when the assembly closed, parted, on the lady's side at least, with a strong inclination for continuing the acquaintance. Whether she thought of him so much, while she drank her warm wine and water, and prepared herself for bed, as to dream of him when there, cannot be ascertained, but I hope it was no more than in a slight slumber, or morning doze at most; for if it be true, as a celebrated writer has maintained, that no young lady can be justified in falling in love before the gentleman's love is declared, it must be very improper that a young lady should dream of a gentleman before the gentleman is first known to have dreamt of her.

From "Northanger Abbey"

THE WARDEN'S TEA-PARTY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

THE party went off as such parties do: there were fat old ladies, in fine silk dresses, and slim young ladies, in gauzy muslin frocks; the old gentlemen stood up with their backs to the empty fire-place, looking by no means so comfortable as they would have done in their own arm-chairs at home;

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through all, and above all is heard the violoncello. Ah, not for nothing were those pegs twisted and re-twisted. Listen, listen! Now alone that saddest of instruments tells its touching tale. Silent and in awe, stand fiddle, flute, and piano, to hear the sorrows of their wailing brother. 'Tis but for a moment. Before the melancholy of those low notes has been fully realised, again comes the full force of all the band. Down go the pedals. Away rush twenty fingers scouring over the bass notes with all the impetus of passion. Apollo blows till his stiff neckcloth is no better than a rope and the minor canon works with both arms till he falls in a syncope of exhaustion against the wall.

How comes it that now, when all should be silent, when courtesy, if not taste, should make men listen—how is it at this moment the black-coated corps leave their retreat and begin skirmishing? One by one they creep forth, and fire off their little guns timidly and without precision. Ah, my men, efforts such as these will take no cities, even though the enemy be never so open to assault. At length a more deadly artillery is brought to bear; slowly, but with effect the advance is made: the muslin ranks are broken and fall into confusion; the formidable array of chairs gives way; the battle is no longer between opposing regiments, but hand to hand and foot to foot with single combatants, as in the glorious days of old, when fighting was really noble. In corners, and under the shadow of curtains, behind sofas and half hidden by doors, in retiring windows, and sheltered by hanging tapestry, are blows given and returned, fatal, incurable, dealing death.

Apart from this, another combat arises, more sober and more serious. The archdeacon is engaged against two prebendaries, a pursy full-blown rector assisting him, in all the perils and all the enjoyments of short whist. With solemn energy do they watch the shuffled pack, and all-expectant eye the coming trump. With what anxious nicety do they

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arrange the cards, jealous of each other's eyes! Why is that lean doctor so slow—cadaverous man with hollow jaw and sunken eye, ill-beseeming the richness of his mother church! Ah, why so slow, thou meagre doctor? See how the archdeacon, speechless in his agony, deposits on the board his cards, and looks to heaven or to the ceiling for support. Hark, how he sighs, as with thumbs in his waistcoat pocket he seems to signify that the end of such torment is not yet even nigh at hand! Vain is the hope, if hope there be, to disturb that meagre doctor. With care precise he places every card, weighs well the value of each mighty ace, each guarded king, and comfort-giving queen; speculates on knave and ten, counts all his suits, and sets his price upon the whole. At length a card is led, and quick three others fall upon the board. The little doctor leads again, while with lustrous eye his partner absorbs the trick. Now thrice has this been done—thrice has constant fortune favoured the brace of prebendaries, ere the archdeacon rouses himself to battle: but at the fourth assault he pins to earth a prostrate king, laying low his crown and sceptre, bushy beard and lowering brow, with a poor deuce.

"As David did Goliath," says the archdeacon, pushing over the four cards to his partner. And then a trump is led, then another trump; then a king—and then an ace—and then a long ten, which brings down from the meagre doctor his only remaining tower of strength—his cherished queen of trumps.

"What, no second club?" says the archdeacon to his partner.

"Only one club," mutters from his inmost stomach the pursy rector, who sits there red-faced, silent, impervious, careful, a safe but not a brilliant ally.

But the archdeacon cares not for many clubs, or for none. He dashes out his remaining cards with a speed most annoying to his antagonists, pushes over to them some four cards

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as their allotted portion, shoves the remainder across the table to the red-faced rector; calls out "Two by cards, and two by honours, and the odd trick last time," marks a treble under the candle-stick, and has dealt round the second pack, before the meagre doctor has calculated his losses.

And so went off the warden's party, and men and women arranging shawls and shoes declared how pleasant it had been; and Mrs Goodenough, the red-faced rector's wife, pressing the warden's hand, declared she had never enjoyed herself better;—which showed how little pleasure she allowed herself in this world, as she had sat the whole evening through in the same chair without occupation, not speaking, and unspoken to. And Matilda Jones, when she allowed young Dickson of the bank to fasten her cloak round her neck, thought that two hundred pounds a year and a little cottage would really do for happiness; besides, he was sure to be manager some day. And Apollo, folding his flute into his pocket, felt that he had acquitted himself with honour; and the archdeacon pleasantly jingled his gains; but the meagre doctor went off without much audible speech, muttering ever and anon as he went, "Three and thirty points!" "Three and thirty points!"

And so they were all gone, and Mr Harding was left alone with his daughter.

From "The Warden"

A MANCHESTER TEA-PARTY

E. C. GASKELL

THE matter being decided, the party proceeded home, through many half-finished streets, all so like one another that you might have easily been bewildered and lost your way. Not a step, however, did our friends lose; down this entry, cutting off this corner, until they turned out of one of these

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innumerable streets into a little paved court, having the backs of houses opposite to the opening, and a gutter running through the middle to carry off household slops, suds, etc. The women who lived in the court were busy taking in strings of caps, frocks, and various articles of linen, which hung from side to side, dangling so low, that if our friends had been a few minutes sooner, they would have had to stoop very much, or else the half-wet clothes would have flapped in their faces: but although the evening seemed yet early when they were in the open fields—among the pent-up houses, night, with its mists, and its darkness, had already begun to fall.

Many greetings were given and exchanged between the Wilsons and these women, for not long ago they had also dwelt in this court.

Mrs Barton produced the key of the door from her pocket; and on entering the house-place it seemed as if they were in total darkness, except one bright spot, which might be a cat's eye, or might be, what it was, a red-hot fire, smouldering under a large piece of coal, which John Barton immediately applied himself to break up, and the effect instantly produced was warm and glowing light in every corner of the room. To add to this (although the coarse yellow glare seemed lost in the ruddy glow from the fire), Mrs Barton lighted a dip by sticking it in the fire, and having placed it satisfactorily in a tin candle-stick, began to look further about her, on hospitable thoughts intent. The room was tolerably large, and possessed many conveniences. On the right of the door, as you entered, was a longish window, with a broad ledge. On each side of this hung blue-and-white check curtains, which were now drawn to shut in the friends met to enjoy themselves. Two geraniums, unpruned and leafy, which stood on the sill formed a further defence from out-door pryers. In the corner between the window and the fire-side was a cupboard apparently full of plates and

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dishes, cups and saucers, and some more nondescript articles, for which one would have fancied their possessors could have found no use—such as triangular pieces of glass to save carving knives and forks from dirtying table-cloths. However it was evident Mrs Barton was proud of her crockery and glass, for she left the door open, with a glance round of pleasure and satisfaction. On the opposite side to the door and window was the staircase, and two doors; one of which (the nearest to the fire), led into a sort of little back-kitchen, where dirty work, such as washing up dishes might be done, and whose shelves served as larder and pantry, and store-room and all. The other door, which was considerably lower, opened into the coal-hole, the slanting closet under the stairs; from which to the fire-place, there was a gay-coloured piece of oil-cloth laid. The place seemed almost crammed with furniture (sure sign of good times among the mills). Beneath the window was a dresser with three deep drawers. Opposite the fire-place was a table, which I should call a Pembroke, only that it was made of deal, and I cannot tell how far such a name may be applied to such humble material. On it, resting against the wall, was a bright green japanned tea-tray, having a couple of scarlet lovers embracing in the middle. The fire-light danced merrily on this, and really (setting all taste but that of a child's aside) it gave a richness of colouring to that side of the room. It was in some measure propped up by a crimson tea-caddy, also of japan-ware. A round table on one branching leg really for use, stood in the corresponding corner to the cupboard; and if you can picture all this with a washy but clean stencilled pattern on the walls, you can form some idea of John Barton's home.

The tray was soon hoisted down, and before the merry chatter of cups and saucers began, the women disburdened themselves of their outdoor things, and sent Mary upstairs with them. Then came a long whispering and chinking of money, to which Mr and Mrs Wilson were too polite to

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attend; knowing, as they did, full well, that it all related to the preparations for hospitality; hospitality, that in their turn, they should have such pleasure in offering. So they tried to be busily occupied with the children, and not to hear Mrs Barton's directions to Mary.

"Run, Mary dear, just round the corner, and get some fresh eggs at Tipping's (you may get one a-piece, that will be fivepence), and see if he has any nice ham cut, that he would let us have a pound of."

"Say two pounds, missis, and don't be stingy," chimed in the husband.

"Well, a pound and a half, Mary. And get it Cumberland ham, for Wilson comes from there-away, and it will have a sort of relish of home with it he'll like,—and, Mary" (seeing the lassie fain to be off), "you must get a pennyworth of milk and a loaf of bread—mind you get it fresh and new—and, and—that's all, Mary."

"No, it's not all," said her husband. "Thou must get sixpennyworth of rum, to warm the tea; thou'll get it at the 'Grapes.' And thou just go to Alice Wilson; he says she lives just right round the corner, under 14 Barber Street" (this was addressed to his wife), "and tell her to come and take tea with us; she'll like to see her brother, I'll be bound, let alone Jane and the twins."

"If she comes she must bring a tea-cup and saucer, for we have but half a dozen, and here's six of us," said Mrs Barton.

"Pooh, pooh! Jem and Mary can drink out of one, surely."

But Mary secretly determined to take care that Alice brought her tea-cup and saucer, if the alternative was to be her sharing anything with Jem.

Alice Wilson had but just come in. She had been out all day in the fields, gathering wild herbs for drinks and medicine. . . . This evening she had returned loaded with nettles,

and her first object was to light a candle and see to hang them up in bunches in every available space in her cellar room. It was the perfection of cleanliness; in one corner stood the modest-looking bed, with a check curtain at the head, the whitewashed wall filling up the space where the corresponding one should have been. The floor was bricked and scrupulously clean, although so damp that it seemed as if the last washing would never dry up. As the cellar window looked into an area in the street, down which boys might throw stones, it was protected by an outside shelter, and was oddly festooned with all manner of hedgerow, ditch, and field plants, which we are accustomed to call valueless, but which have a powerful effect either for good or for evil, and are consequently much used among the poor. The room was strewed, hung, and darkened with these bunches, which emitted no very fragrant odour in their process of drying. In one corner was a sort of broad hanging shelf, made of old planks, where some old hoards of Alice's were kept. Her little bit of crockery-ware was ranged on the mantelpiece, where also stood her candlestick and box of matches. A small cupboard contained at the bottom coals, and at the top her bread and basin of oatmeal, her frying-pan, tea-pot and a small tin saucepan which served as a bottle as well as for cooking the delicate messes of broth which Alice sometimes was able to manufacture for a sick neighbour.

After her walk she felt chilly and weary, and was busy trying to light her fire with the damp coals and half-green sticks, when Mary knocked.

"Come in," said Alice, remembering, however, that she had barred the door for the night and hastening to make it possible for anyone to come in.

"Is that you, Mary Barton?" exclaimed she, as the light from her candle streamed on the girl's face. "How you are grown since I used to see you at my brother's! Come in, lass, come in."

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"Please," said Mary, almost breathless, "mother says you're to come to tea, and bring your own cup and saucer, for George and Jane Wilson is with us, and the twins and Jem. And you're to make haste, please."

"I'm sure it's very neighbourly and kind in your mother, and I'll come, with many thanks. Stay, Mary, has your mother got any nettles for spring drink? If she hasn't, I'll take her some."

"No, I don't think she has."

Mary ran off like a hare, to fulfil what, to a girl of thirteen fond of power, was the most interesting part of her errand—the money-spending part. And well and ably did she perform her business, returning home with a little bottle of rum and the eggs in one hand, while her other was filled with some excellent red-and-white, smoke-flavoured Cumberland ham, wrapped up in paper.

She was at home, and frying ham, before Alice had chosen her nettles, put out her candle, locked her door, and walked in a very foot-sore manner as far as John Barton's. What an aspect of comfort did his house-place present, after her humble cellar! She did not think of comparing; but for all that she felt the delicious glow of the fire, the bright light that revelled in every corner of the room, the savoury smells, the comfortable sounds of a boiling kettle, and the hissing, frizzling ham. With a little old-fashioned curtsey she shut the door, and replied with a loving heart to the boisterous and surprised greeting of her brother.

And now all preparations being made, the party sat down, Mrs Wilson in the post of honour, the rocking-chair on the right-hand side of the fire, nursing her baby, while its father, in an opposite arm-chair tried vainly to quieten the other with bread soaked in milk.

Mrs Barton knew manners too well, to do anything but sit at the tea-table and make tea, though in her heart she longed to be able to superintend the frying of the ham, and

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cast many an anxious look at Mary as she broke the eggs and turned the ham, with a very comfortable portion of confidence in her own culinary powers. Jem stood awkwardly leaning against the dresser, replying rather gruffly to his aunt's speeches, which gave him, he thought, the air of being a little boy; whereas he considered himself as a young man, and not so very young neither, as in two months he would be eighteen. Barton vibrated between the fire and the tea-table, his only drawback being a fancy that every now and then his wife's face flushed and contracted as if in pain.

At length the business actually began. Knives and forks, cups and saucers made a noise, but human voices were still, for human beings were hungry and had no time to speak. Alice first broke silence; holding her tea-cup with the manner of one proposing a toast, she said, "Here's to absent friends. Friends may meet, but mountains never."

It was an unlucky toast or sentiment, as she instantly felt. Every one thought of Esther, the absent Esther; and Mrs Barton put down her food and could not hide the fast-dropping tears. Alice could have bitten her tongue out.

It was a wet blanket to the evening; for though all had been said and suggested in the fields that could be said or suggested, every one had a wish to say something in the way of comfort to poor Mrs Barton, and a dislike to talk about anything else while her tears fell fast and scalding. So George Wilson and his wife, and children, set off early home, not before (in spite of *mal-à-propos* speeches) they had expressed a wish that such meetings might often take place, and not before John Barton had given his hearty consent; and declared that as soon as his wife was well again they would have just such another evening.

From "Mery Barton"

FOX-HUNTING

FOX-HUNTING

CHARLES KINGSLEY

THE edge of a great fox-cover; a flat wilderness of low leafless oaks fortified by a long, dreary, thorn-capped clay ditch, with sour red water oozing out at every yard; a broken gate leading into a straight wood-ride, ragged with dead grasses and black with fallen leaves, the centre mashed into a quagmire by innumerable horse-hoofs; some forty red coats, and some four black; a sprinkling of young farmers resplendent in gold buttons and green; a pair of sleek drab stable-keepers, showing off horses for sale; the surgeon of the union, in mackintosh and antigropelous; two holiday schoolboys with trousers strapped down to bursting point, like a penny-steamer's safety valve; a midshipman, the only merry one in the field, bumping about on a fretting, sweating hack, with its nose a foot above its ears; and Lancelot Smith, who then kept two good horses, and "rode forward" as a fine young fellow of three-and-twenty who can afford it, and "has nothing else to do," has a very good right to ride.

But what is a description without a sketch of the weather? In these Pantheistic days especially, when a hero or heroine's moral state must depend entirely on the barometer, and authors talk as if Christians were cabbages, and a man's soul as well as his lungs might be saved by sea-breezes and sunshine; or his character developed by wearing guano in his shoes, and training himself against a south wall—we must have a weather description, though, as I shall presently show, one in flat contradiction to the popular theory. Luckily for our information, Lancelot was very much given to watch both the weather and himself, and had, indeed, while in his teens, combined the two in a sort of soul almanac, on the principles just mentioned—somewhat in this style:

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Mesday, 21st.—Wind S.W., bright sun, mercury at 70° inches. Felt my heart expanded towards the universe. Organs of veneration and benevolence pleasurely excited; and gave a shilling to a tramp. An inexpressible joy bounded through every vein, and the soft air breathed purity and self-sacrifice through my soul. As I watched the beetles, those children of the sun, who, as divine Shelley says, " Laden with light and odour, pass over the plumb of the living grass," I gained an Eden-like glimpse of the pleasures of virtue.

N.B.—Found the tramp drunk in a ditch. I could not hate degraded myself on such a day—ah! how could he!

Tuesday, 22nd.—Barometer rapidly falling. Heavy clouds in the south-east. My heart sank into gloomy forebodings. Read *Manfred* and doubted whether I should live long. The leaden weight of destiny seemed to crush down my aching forehead, till the thunderstorm burst, and peace was restored to my troubled soul.

This was bad, but to do Lancelet justice, he had grown out of it at the time when my story begins. . . .

But where is my description of the weather all this time?

I cannot, I am sorry to say, give any very cheerful account of the weather that day. But what matter? Are Englishmen hedge-gnats, who only take their sport when the sun shines? Is it not, on the contrary, symbolical of our national character that almost all our field-amusements are wintry ones? Our fowling, our hunting, our punt-shooting (pastime for Hymir himself and the frost-giants)—our golf and skating—our very cricket, and boat-racing, and jack and grayling fishing, carried on till we are fairly frozen out. We are a stern people, and winter suits us. Nature then retires modestly into the background, and spares us the obtrusive glitter of summer, leaving us to think and to work, and, therefore, it happens in England, it may be taken as a general rule, that whenever the rest of the world is in-doors, we are out and busy, and, on the whole, the worse the day, the better the deed.

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The weather that day was truly national. A silent, dim, distanceless, steaming, rotting day in March. The last brown oak-leaf that had stood out the winter's frost, spun and quivered plump down, and then lay, as if ashamed to have broken for a moment the ghastly stillness, like an awkward guest at a great dumb dinner-party. A cold suck of wind just proved its existence, by tooth-aches on the north sides of all faces. The spiders having been weather-bewitched the night before, had unanimously agreed to cover every brake and briar with gossamer-cradles, and never a fly to be caught in them; like Manchester cotton-spinners madly glutting the markets in the teeth of "No demand." The steam crawled out of the dank turf, and reeked off the flanks and nostrils of the shivering horses, and clung with clammy paws to frosted hats and dripping boughs. . . .

There sat Lancelot by the cover-side, his knees aching with cold and wet, thanking his stars that he was not one of the whippers-in who were lashing about in the dripping cover, laying up for themselves, in catering for the amusement of their betters, a probable old age of bed-ridden torture, in the form of rheumatic gout. . . .

But "all things do end," and so did this; and the silence of the hounds also; and Lancelot began to stalk slowly with a dozen horsemen up the wood-ride, to a fitful accompaniment of wandering hound-music, where the choristers were as invisible as nightingales among the thick cover. And hark!—the sweet hubbub suddenly crashed out into one jubilant shriek, and then swept away fainter and fainter, among the trees. The walk became a trot—the trot a canter. Then a faint melancholy shout at a distance, answered by a "Stole away!" from the fields, a doleful "toot" of the horn; the dull thunder of many horse-hoofs rolling along the farther wood-side. Then red coats flashing like sparks of fire across the grey gap of mist at the ride's-mouth; then a whipper-in, bringing up a belated hound

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burst into the path-way, splashing and plunging, with shut eyes, through ash-splinters and horse-grass; then a fat farmer, sedulously pounding through the mud, was overtaken and bespattered in spite of all his struggles; until the line streamed out into the wide dusky prairie, startling up pheasants and curlews, as horsemen poured in from every side, and cunning old farmers rode off at inexplicable angles to some well-known haunts of pug: and right ahead, chiming and jangling sweet madness, the dappled pack glanced and wavered through the veil of soft grey mist.

"What's the use of this hurry?" growled Lancelot. "They will all be back again. I never have the luck to see a run."

But no; on and on—down the wind and down the vale; and the canter became a gallop; and the gallop a long straining stride; and a hundred horse-hoofs crackled like flame among the stubbles and thundered fetlock-deep along the heavy meadows; and every fence thinned the cavalcade, till the madness began to stir all bloods, and with grim earnest silent faces, the initiated few settled themselves to their work, and with the colonel and Lancelot at their head, "took their pleasures sadly, after the manner of their nation," as old Froissart has it. . . .

Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Thorough park, thorough pale;

till the rolling grass-lands spread out into flat black open fallows, crossed with grassy baulks, and here and there a long melancholy line of tall elms, while before them the high chalk ridges gleamed above the mist like a vast wall of emerald enamelled with snow, and the winding river glittering at their feet.

"A polite fox!" observed the colonel. "He's leading the squire straight home to Whitsford, just in time for dinner."

From "Yeast"

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W. M. THACKERAY

IN Steyne Gardens, Brighton, the lodging-houses are among the most frequented in that city of lodging-houses. These mansions have bow-windows in front, bulging out with gentle prominences and ornamented with neat verandas, from which you can behold the tide of humankind as it flows up and down the Steyne, and that blue ocean over which Britannia is said to rule, stretching brightly away, eastward and westward. The chain-pier, as everybody knows, runs intrepidly into the sea, which sometimes, in fine weather, bathes its feet with laughing wavelets, and anon, on stormy days, dashes over its sides with roaring foam. Here, for the sum of twopence, you can go out to sea and pace this vast deck without need of a steward with a basin. You can watch the sun setting in splendour over Worthing, or illuminating with its rising glories the ups and downs of Rottingdean. You see the citizen inveigled with his family into the shallows of the mercenary native mariner, and fancy that the motion cannot be pleasant, and how the hirer of the boat, *otium et oppidi laudans rura sii*, haply sighs for ease, and prefers Richmond or Hampstead. You behold a hundred bathing-machines put to sea, and your naughty fancy depicts the beauties splashing under their white awnings. Along the rippled sands (stay, are they rippled sands, or shingly beach?), the prawn-boy seeks the delicious material of your breakfast—meal in London almost unknown, greedily devoured in Brighton! In yon vessels now nearing the shore the sleepless mariner has ventured forth to seize the delicate whiting, the greedy and foolish mackerel, and the homely sole. Hark to the twanging horn! it is the early coach going out to London. Your eye follows it, and rests on the pinnacles built by the beloved GEORGE. See the worn-out London *roué* pacing the

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pier, inhaling the sea air, and casting furtive glances under the bonnets of the pretty girls who trot here before lessons! Mark the bilious lawyer, escaped for a day from Pump Court, and sniffing the fresh breezes before he goes back to breakfast and a bag-full of briefs at the Albion! See that pretty string of prattling school-girls, from the chubby-cheeked flaxen-haired little maiden just toddling by the side of the second teacher, to the arch damsel of fifteen, giggling and conscious of her beauty, whom the stern head-governess awfully reprobates! See Tomkins with a telescope and marine jacket; young Nathan and young Abrams, already bedizened in jewellery, and rivalling the sun in Oriental splendour; yonder poor invalid crawling along in her chair; yonder jolly, fat lady examining the Brighton pebbles (I actually once saw a lady buy one), and her children wondering at the sticking-plaster portraits with gold hair and gold stocks, and prodigious high-heeled boots, miracles of art and cheap at seven-and-sixpence! It is the fashion to run down George the Fourth, but what myriads of Londoners ought to thank him for inventing Brighton! One of the best physicians our city has ever known is kind, cheerful, merry Doctor Brighton. Hail, thou purveyor of shrimps and honest prescriber of South Down mutton! There is no mutton so good as Brighton mutton; no flies as pleasant as Brighton flies, nor any cliff so pleasant to ride on; no shops so beautiful to look at as the Brighton gimcrack shops, and the fruit shops and the market. I fancy myself in Miss Honeyman's lodgings in Steyne Gardens, and in enjoyment of all these things. . . .

Now, Aunt Honeyman was a woman of a thousand virtues, cheerful, frugal, honest, laborious, charitable, good-humoured, truth-telling, devoted to her family, capable of any sacrifice for those she loved; and when she came to have losses of money, Fortune straightway compensated her by many kindnesses which no income can supply. The good old lady admired the word gentlewoman of all others in the

English vocabulary, and made all around her feel that such was her rank. Her mother's father was a naval captain. Her father had taken pupils, got a living, sent his son to college, dined with the squire, published his volume of sermons, was liked in his parish, where Miss Honeyman kept house for him, was respected for his kindness and famous for his port wine; and so died, leaving about two hundred pounds a year to his two children—nothing to Clive Newcome's mother, who had displeased him by her first marriage (an elopement with Ensign Casey) and subsequent light courses. Charles Honeyman spent his money elegantly in wine parties at Oxford, and afterwards in foreign travel—spent his money, and as much of Miss Honeyman's as that worthy soul would give him. She was a woman of spirit and resolution. She brought her furniture to Brighton (believing that the whole place still fondly remembered her grandfather, Captain Nokes, who had resided there, and his gallantry in Lord Rodney's action with the Count de Grasse), took a house and let the upper floors to lodgers.

The little brisk old lady brought a maid-servant out of the country with her, who was daughter to her father's clerk, and had learned her letters and worked her first sampler under Miss Honeyman's own eye, whom she adored all through her life. No Indian begum rolling in wealth, no countess mistress of castle and town-houses, ever had such a faithful toady as Hannah Hicks was to her mistress. Under Hannah was a young lady from the workhouse, who called Hannah "Mrs Hicks, mum," and who bowed in awe as much before that domestic as Hannah did before Miss Honeyman. At five o'clock in summer, at seven in winter (for Miss Honeyman, a good economist, was chary of candlelight), Hannah woke up little Sally, and these three women rose. I leave you to imagine what a row there was in the establishment if Sally appeared with flowers under her bonnet, gave signs of levity or insubordination, prolonged her absence when sent

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forth for the beer, or was discovered in flirtation with the baker's boy, or the grocer's young man. Sally was frequently renewed. Miss Honeyman called all her young persons Sally; and a great number of Sallies were consumed in her house. The qualities of the Sally for the time being formed a constant and delightful subject of conversation between Hannah and her mistress. The few friends who visited Miss Honeyman in her back parlour had *their* Sallies, in discussing whose peculiarities of disposition these good ladies passed the hours agreeably over their tea.

Many persons who let lodgings in Brighton have been servants themselves—are retired housekeepers, tradespeople, and the like. With these surrounding individuals Hannah treated on a footing of equality, bringing to her mistress accounts of their various goings-on: "how No. 6 was let; how No. 9 had not paid his rent again; how the first floor at 27 had game almost every day, and made-dishes from Mutton's; how the family who had taken Mrs Bugsby's had left after the very first night, the poor little infant blistered all over with bites on its dear little face; how Mrs Cribb *still* went cuttin' pounds and pounds off of meat off the lodger's jints, emptying their tea-caddies, actially reading their letters. Sally had been told so by Polly, the Cribbs' maid, who was kep', how that poor child was kep', hearing language perfectly hawful!" These tales and anecdotes, not altogether redounding to their neighbour's credit, Hannah copiously collected and brought to her mistress's tea-table, or served at her frugal little supper, when Miss Honeyman, the labours of the day over, partook of that cheerful meal. I need not say that such horrors as occurred at Mrs Bugsby's never befell in Miss Honeyman's establishment. Every room was fiercely swept and sprinkled, and watched by cunning eyes which nothing could escape; curtains were taken down, mattresses explored, every bone in bed dislocated and washed as soon as a lodger took his departure. And as for cribbing

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meat or sugar, Sally might occasionally abstract a lump or two, or pop a veal cutlet into her mouth while bringing the dishes downstairs—Sallies would—giddy creatures bred in workhouses, but Hannah might be trusted with untold gold and uncorked brandy, and Miss Honeyman would as soon think of cutting a slice off Hannah's nose and devouring it, as of poaching on her lodger's mutton. The best mutton-broth, the best veal-cutlets, the best necks of mutton and French beans, the best fried fish and plumpest partridges in all Brighton, were to be had at Miss Honeyman's—and for her favourites the best Indian curry and rice, coming from a distinguished relative, at present an officer in Bengal. But very few were admitted to this mark of Miss Honeyman's confidence. If a family did not go to church, they were not in favour; if they went to a Dissenting meeting, she had no opinion of them at all. Once there came to her house a quiet Staffordshire family, who ate no meat on Fridays, and whom Miss Honeyman pitied as belonging to the Romish superstition; but when they were visited by two corpulent gentlemen in black, one of whom wore a purple under-waistcoat, before whom the Staffordshire lady absolutely sank down on her knees as he went into the drawing-room, Miss Honeyman sternly gave warning to these idolaters. She would have no Jesuits in *her* premises. She showed Hannah the picture in Howell's *Medulla* of the martyrs burning at Smithfield, who said, "Lord bless you, mum," and hoped it was a long time ago. She called on the curate; and many and many a time, for years after, pointed out to her friends, and sometimes to her lodgers, the spot on the carpet where the poor benighted creature had knelt down. So she went on, respected by all her friends, by her tradesmen, by herself not a little, talking of her previous 'misfortunes' with amusing equanimity; as if her father's parsonage house had been a palace of splendour, and the one-horse chaise (with the lamps for evenings) from which she had descended, a noble equipage. "But I know

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it is for the best, Clive," she would say to her nephew, in describing these grandeur, "and, thank Heaven, can I be resigned in that station in life to which it has pleased God to call me."

The good lady was called the Duchess by her fellow-tradesfolk in the square in which she lived. (I don't know what would have come to her if she had been told she was a tradeswoman!) Her butchers, bakers, and market-people paid her as much respect as though she had been a grande's housekeeper out of Kemp Town. Knowing her station, she yet was kind to these inferior beings. She held affable conversations with them. She patronized Mr Rogers, who was said to be worth a hundred thousand pounds (or lbs., was it?), and who said, "Law bless the old Duchess, she do make as much of a pound of veal-cutlet as some would of a score of bullocks; but you see she's a lady born, and a lady bred: she'd die before she'd owe a farthing, and she's seen better days, you know." . . . Her fishmonger (it was fine to hear her talk of "my fishmonger") would sell her a whiting as respectfully as if she had called for a dozen turbots and lobsters. It was believed by those good folks that her father had been a bishop at the very least, and the better days which she had known were supposed to signify some almost unearthly prosperity. "I have always found, Hannah," the simple soul would say, "that people know their place, or can be very easily made to find it if they lose it; and if a gentlewoman does not forget herself, her inferiors will not forget that she is a gentlewoman." "No, indeed, mum," says Hannah, who carries away the tea-pot for her own breakfast (to be transmitted to Sally for her subsequent refection), whilst her mistress washes her cup and saucer, as her mother had washed her own china many scores of years ago.

If some of the surrounding lodging-house keepers, as I have no doubt they did, disliked the little Duchess for the airs which she gave herself, as they averred, they must have

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envied too her superior prosperity ; for there was scarcely ever a card in her window, whilst those ensigns in her neighbours' houses would remain exposed to the flies and the weather, and disregarded by passers-by, for months together. She had many regular customers, or what should be called constant friends. Deaf old Mr Cricklade came every winter for fourteen years, and stopped until the hunting was over ; an invaluable man, giving little trouble, passing all day on horseback, and all night over his rubber at the club. The Misses Barkham, Barkhambury, Tunbridge Wells, whose father had been at college with Mr Honeyman, came regularly in June for sea air, letting Barkhambury for the summer season. Then for many years, she had her nephew, as we have seen, and kind recommendations from the clergymen of Brighton, and a constant friend in the celebrated Dr Goodenough of London, who had been her father's private pupil, and of his college afterwards, who sent his patients from time to time down to her, and his fellow physician, Dr H—, who on his part would never take any fee from Miss Honeyman, except a packet of Indian curry-powder, a ham cured as only she knew how to cure them, and once a year or so, a dish of her tea.

"Was there ever such luck as that confounded old Duchess's?" says Mr Gawler, coal-merchant and lodging-house keeper, next door but two, whose lodgings were more odious in some respects than Mrs Bugsby's own. "Was there ever such devil's own luck, Mrs G.? It's only a fortnight ago as I read in the *Sussex Advertiser* the death of Miss Barkham of Barkhambury, Tunbridge Wells, and thinks I, there's a spoke in *your* wheel, you stuck-up little old Duchess, with your cussed airs and impudence. And she ain't put her card up three days, and look yere, yere's two carriages, two maids, three children, one of them wrapped up in a Hinjar shawl—man hout a livery—looks like a foring cove, I think—lady in satin pelisse; and of course they go to the Duchess,

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be hanged to her! Of course it's our luck; nothing ever was like our luck. I'm blowed if I don't put a pistol to my 'ead, and end it, Mrs G. There they go in—three, four, six, seven on 'em, and the man. That's the precious child's physic, I suppose he's a-carryin' in the basket. Just look at the luggage. I say! There's a bloody hand on the first carriage. It's a baronet, is it? I 'ope your ladyship's very well; and I 'ope Sir John will soon be down yere to join his family."

Mr Gawler makes sarcastic bows over the card in his bow-window whilst making this speech. The little Gawlers rush on to the drawing-room veranda themselves to examine the new arrivals.

"This is Miss Honeyman's?" asks the gentleman designated by Mr Gawler as the "foring cove," and hands in a card, on which the words "Miss Honeyman, 110 Steyne Gardens—J. Goodenough" are written in that celebrated physician's handwriting. "We want fise bet-rooms, six bets, two or dree sitting-rooms. Have you got dese?"

"Will you speak to my mistress?" says Hannah. And if it is a fact that Miss Honeyman *does* happen to be in the front parlour looking at the carriages, what harm is there in the circumstance, pray? Is not Gawler looking, and the people next door? Are not half a dozen little boys already gathered in the street (as if they started up out of the trap-doors for the coals); and the nursery-maids in the stunted little garden, are they not looking through the bars of the square? "Please to speak to mistress," says Hannah, opening the parlour-door, and with a curtsey, "A gentleman about the apartments, mum."

"Fise bet-rooms," says the man entering, "six bets, two or dree sitting-rooms? We come from Dr Goodenough."

"Are the apartments for you, sir?" says the little Duchess, looking up at the large gentleman.

"For my lady," answers the man.

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"Had you better not take off your hat?" asks the Duchess, pointing out of one of her little mittens to the "foring cove's" beaver which he has neglected to remove.

The man grins, and takes off the hat. "I beck your bardon, ma'am," says he. "Have you fise bet-rooms?" etc. The Doctor has cured the German of an illness, as well as his employers, and especially recommended Miss Honeyman to Mr Kuhn.

"I have such a number of apartments. My servant will show them to you." And she walks back with great state to her chair by the window, and resumes her station and work there.

From "The Newcomes"

TODGERS'S

CHARLES DICKENS

THE drawing-room at Todgers's was out of the common style; so much so, indeed, that you would hardly have taken it to be a drawing-room, unless you were told so by somebody who was in the secret. It was floor-clothed all over; and the ceiling, including a great beam in the middle, was papered. Besides the three little windows, with seats in them, commanding the opposite archway, there was another window looking point-blank, without any compromise at all about it, into Jinkins's bedroom; and, high up, all along one side of the wall, was a strip of panes of glass, two-deep giving light to the staircase. There were the oddest closets possible, with little casements in them like eight-day clocks, lurking in the wainscot and taking the shape of the stairs; and the very door itself (which was painted black) had two great glass eyes in its forehead, with an inquisitive green pupil in the middle of each.

Here the gentlemen were all assembled. There was a

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general cry of "Hear, hear!" and "Bravo, Jink" when Mr Jinkins appeared with Charity on his arm; which became quite rapturous when Mr Gander followed, escorting Mercy, and Mr Pecksniff brought up the rear with Mrs Todgers.

Then the presentations took place. They included a gentleman of a sporting turn who propounded questions on jockey subjects to the editors of Sunday papers, which were regarded by his friends as rather stiff things to answer; and they included a gentleman of a theatrical turn, who had once entertained serious thoughts of "coming out," but had been kept in by the wickedness of human nature; and they included a gentleman of a debating turn, who was strong at speech-making; and a gentleman of a literary turn, who wrote squibs upon the rest, and knew the weak side of everybody's character but his own. There was a gentleman of a vocal turn, and a gentleman of a smoking turn, and a gentleman of a convivial turn; some of the gentlemen had a turn for whist, and a large proportion of the gentlemen had a strong turn for billiards and betting. They had all, it may be presumed, a turn for business; being all commercially employed in one way or other; and had, every one in his own way, a decided turn for pleasure, to boot. Mr Jinkins was of a fashionable turn; being a regular frequenter of the parks on Sundays, and knowing a great many carriages by sight. He spoke mysteriously, too, of splendid women, and was suspected of having once committed himself with a countess. . . . Mr Jinkins, it may be added, was much the oldest of the party, being a fish-salesman's bookkeeper, aged forty. He was the oldest boarder also; and in right of his double seniority, took the lead in the house, as Mrs Todgers had already said.

There was considerable delay in the production of dinner, and poor Mrs Todgers, being reproached in confidence by Jinkins, slipped in and out, at least twenty times to see about

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it, always coming back as though she had no such thing upon her mind and hadn't been out at all. But there was no hitch in the conversation, nevertheless, for one gentleman, who travelled in the perfumery line, exhibited an interesting nick-nack in the way of a remarkable cake of shaving soap that he had lately met with in Germany; and the gentleman of a literary turn recited (by desire) some sarcastic stanzas he recently produced on the freezing of the tank at the back of the house. These amusements, with the miscellaneous conversation arising out of them, passed the time splendidly, until dinner was announced by Bailey junior in these terms,

"The wittles is up!"

On which notice they immediately descended to the banquet-hall; some of the more facetious spirits in the rear taking down gentlemen as if they were ladies, in imitation of the fortunate possessors of the two Miss Pecksniffs.

Mr Pecksniff said grace—a short and pious grace, invoking a blessing on the appetites of those present, and committing all persons who had nothing to eat to the care of Providence, whose business (so said the grace, in effect) it clearly was to look after them. This done, they fell to, with less ceremony than appetite; the table groaning beneath the weight not only of the delicacies whereof the Miss Pecksniffs had been previously forewarned, but of boiled beef, roast veal, bacon, pies, and abundance of such heavy vegetables as are favourably known to housekeepers for their satisfying qualities. Besides which, there were bottles of stout, bottles of wine, bottles of ale, and divers other strong drinks, native and foreign.

All this was highly agreeable to the two Miss Pecksniffs who were in great request; sitting one on either hand of Mr Jinkins at the bottom of the table; and who were called upon to take wine with some new admirer every minute. They had hardly ever felt so pleasant, or so full of conversation, in their lives; Mercy, in particular, was uncommonly

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brilliant, and said so many good things in the way of lively repartee that she was looked upon as a prodigy. "In short," as that young lady observed, "they felt now, indeed, that they were in London, and for the first time, too."

Their young friend, Bailey, sympathised in these feelings to the fullest extent, and, abating nothing of his patronage, gave them every encouragement in his power; favouring them when the general attention was diverted from his proceedings, with many nods and winks, and other tokens of recognition, and occasionally touching his nose with a cork-screw, as if to express the Bacchanalian character of the meeting. In truth, perhaps even the spirits of the Miss Pecksniffs, and the hungry watchfulness of Mrs Todgers, were less worthy of note than the proceedings of this remarkable boy, whom nothing disconcerted or put out of his way. If any piece of crockery, a dish or otherwise, chanced to slip through his hands (which happened once or twice) he let it go with perfect good breeding, and never added to the painful emotions of the company by exhibiting the least regret. Nor did he, by hurrying to and fro, disturb the repose of the assembly, as many well-trained servants do; on the contrary, feeling the hopelessness of waiting on so large a party, he left the gentlemen to help themselves to what they wanted, and seldom stirred from Mr Jinkins's chair, where, with his hands in his pockets, and his legs planted pretty wide apart, he led the laughter, and enjoyed the conversation.

The dessert was splendid. No waiting either. The pudding-plates had been washed in a little tub outside the door while the cheese was on, and though they were moist and warm with friction, still there they were again—up to the mark, and true to time. Quarts of almonds; dozens of oranges; pounds of raisins; stacks of biffins; soup-plates full of nuts. Oh! Todgers's could do it when it chose. Mind that.

Then more wine came on, red wines and white wines;

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and a large china bowl of punch, brewed by the gentleman of a convivial turn, who adjured the Miss Pecksniffs not to be despondent on account of its dimensions, as there were materials in the house for the decoction of half a dozen more of the same size. Good gracious, how they laughed! How they coughed, when they sipped it, because it was so strong; and how they laughed again when somebody vowed that, but for its colour, it might have been mistaken, in regard of its innocuous qualities, for new milk! What a shout of "No!" burst from the gentlemen when they pathetically implored Mr Jinkins to suffer them to qualify it with hot water; and how blushingly, and little by little, did each of them drink her whole glassful, down to its very dregs!

Now comes the trying time. The sun, as Mr Jinkins says (gentlemanly creature, Jinkins—never at a loss), is about to leave the firmament. "Miss Pecksniff!" says Mrs Todgers softly. "Will you——?" "Oh, dear, no more, Mrs Todgers." Mrs Todgers rises; the two Miss Pecksniffs rise; all rise. Miss Mercy Pecksniff looks downward for her scarf. Where is it? Dear me, where *can* it be? Sweet girl, she has it on; not on her fair neck, but loose upon her flowing figure. A dozen hands assist her. She is all confusion. The youngest gentleman in company thirsts to murder Jinkins. She skips and joins her sister at the door. Her sister has her arm about the waist of Mrs Todgers. She winds her arm around her sister. Diana, what a picture! The last things visible are a shape and a skip. "Gentlemen, let us drink the ladies!"

From "Martin Chuzzlewit"

WAYFARING LIFE BY COACH TO RUGBY

THOMAS HUGHES

TOM addressed himself to the coffee and prattled away while he worked himself into his shoes and his great-coat, well warmed through; a Petersham coat, with velvet collar, made tight after the abominable fashion of those days. And just as he is swallowing his last mouthful, winding his comforter round his throat, and tucking the ends into the breast of his coat, the horn sounds, Boots looks in, and says, "Tally-ho, sir!" and they hear the ring and rattle of the four fast trotters and the town-made drag as it dashes up to the Peacock.

"Anything for us, Bob?" says the burly guard, dropping down from behind, and slapping himself across the chest.

"Young gen'l'm'n, Rugby; three parcels, Leicester; hamper o' game, Rugby," answers ostler.

"Tell young gent look alive," says guard, opening the hind-boot and shooting in the parcels after examining them by the lamps. "Here, shove the portmanteau up a-top, I'll fasten him presently. Now then, sir, jump up behind."

"Good-bye, father—my love at home." A last shake of the hand. Up goes Tom, the guard catching his hat-box and holding on with one hand while with the other he claps his horn to his mouth. Toot, toot, toot! the ostlers let go their heads, the four bays plunge at the collar, and away goes the Tally-ho into the darkness, forty-five seconds from the time they pulled up; Ostler, Boots, and the Squire, stand looking after them under the Peacock lamp.

"Sharp work!" says the Squire, and goes in again to his bed, the coach being well out of sight and hearing.

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And now the dawn breaks at the end of the fourth stage, and the coach pulls up at a little road-side inn with huge stables behind. There is a bright fire gleaming through the red curtains of the bar window, and the door is open. The coachman catches his whip into a double thong, and throws it to the ostler; the steam of the horses rises straight up into the air. He has put them along over the last two miles, and is two minutes before his time; he rolls down from the box and into the inn. The guard rolls off behind. "Now, sir," says he to Tom, "you just jump down, and I'll give you a drop of something to keep the cold out."

Tom finds a difficulty in jumping, or indeed, in finding the top of the wheel with his feet, which may be in the next world for all he feels; so the guard picks him off the coach-top, and sets him on his legs, and they stump off into the bar, and join the coachman, and the other outside passengers.

Here a fresh-looking barmaid serves them each with a glass of early purl, as they stand before the fire, coachman and guard exchanging business remarks. The purl warms the cockles of Tom's heart, and makes him cough.

"Rare tackle that, of a cold morning," says the coachman, smiling. "Time's up!" They are out again, and up: coachee the last, gathering the reins into his hands and talking to Jem the ostler about the mare's shoulder and then swinging himself up on the box—the horses dashing off at a canter before he falls into his seat. Toot, toot-tootle-too goes the horn, and away they are again, five and thirty miles on their road (nearly half-way to Rugby thinks Tom), and the prospect of breakfast at the end of their stage.

And now they begin to see, and the early life of the countryside comes out; a market-cart or two, men in smock-frocks going to their work, pipe in mouth, a whiff of which is no bad smell this bright morning. The sun gets up, and the mist shines like silver gauze. They pass the hounds jogging along to a distant meet, at the heels of the huntsman's

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beef-man. He also eats hot porridge, and affords himself to a tankard of ale, which is brought him by the barmaid. Sportsman looks on approvingly, and orders a ditto for himself.

Tom has eaten kidney and pigeon pie, and imbibed coffee, till his little skin is as tight as a drum; and then has the further pleasure of paying head-waiter out of his own purse, in a dignified manner, and walks out before the inn door to see the horses put to. This is done leisurely and in a highly finished manner by the ostlers, as if they enjoyed the not being hurried. Coachman comes out with his way-bill, and puffing a fat cigar which the sportsman has given him. Guard emerges from the tap, where he prefers breakfasting, licking round a tough-looking doubtful cheetoon, which you might tie round your finger, and three whiffs of which would knock any one else out of time.

The pinks stand about the inn-door lighting cigars and waiting to see us start, while their backs are led up and down the market-place on which the inn looks. They all know our sportsman, and we feel a reflected credit when we see him chatting and laughing with them.

"Now, sir, please," says the coachman; all the rest of the passengers are up, and the guard is locking the hind-boot.

"A good run to you!" says the sportsman to the pinks, and is by the coachman's side in no time.

"Let 'em go, Dick!" The ostlers sit back, drawing off the cloths from their glossy loins, and away we go through the market-place and down the High Street, looking in at the first-floor windows and seeing several worthy burgesses shaving thereat; while all the shop-boys who are cleaning the windows, and house-maids who are doing the steps, stop and look pleased as we rattle past, as if it were a part of their legitimate morning's amusement. We clear the town and are well out in the hedgerows again as the clock strikes eight.

The sun shines almost warmly, and breakfast has oiled all springs and loosened all tongues. Tom is encouraged by a

BY COACH TO RUGBY

remark or two of the guard's between the puffs of his oily cheroot, and besides is getting tired of not talking. He is too full of his destination to talk about anything else, and so asks the guard if he knows Rugby.

"Goes through it every day of my life. Twenty minutes afore twelve down—ten o'clock up."

"What sort of a place is it, please?" says Tom.

Guard looks at him with a comical expression. "Werry out-o'-the-way place, sir, no paving to streets nor no lighting. 'Mazin' big horse and cattle fair in autumn—lasts a week—just over now. Takes town a week to get clean after it. Fairish hunting country. But slow place, sir, slow place: off the main road you see—only three coaches a day, and one on 'em a two-oss wan, more like a hearse nor a coach. Regulator comes from Oxford. Young gen'l'm'n at school calls him Pig and Whistle, and goes up to college by him (six miles an hour) when they goes to enter. Belong to school, sir?"

"Yes," says Tom, not unwilling for the moment that the guard should think him an old boy. But then having some qualms as to the truth of the assertion, and seeing that if he were to assume the character of an old boy he couldn't go on asking the questions he wanted, added—"that is to say, I'm on my way there. I'm a new boy."

The guard looked as if he knew this quite as well as Tom.

"You're werry late, sir," says the guard; "only six weeks to-day to the end of the half." Tom assented. "We takes up fine loads this day six weeks and the Monday and Tuesday arter. Hopes we shall have the pleasure of carrying you back."

Tom said he hoped they would, but he thought within himself that his fate would probably be the Pig and Whistle. . . .

Tom showed such undisguised and open-mouthed interest in his narratives, that the old guard rubbed up his memory, and launched out into a graphic history of all the performances of the boys on the roads for the last twenty years. Off

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the road he couldn't go; the exploit must have been connected with horses or vehicles to hang in the old fellow's head. Tom tried him off his own ground once or twice, but found he knew nothing beyond, and so let him have his head, and the rest of the road howled easily away; for old Blow-hard (as the boys called him) was a dry old file, with much kindness and humour, and a capital spinner of a yarn when he had broken the neck of his day's work, and got plenty of ale under his belt.

The guard had just finished an account of a desperate fight which had happened at one of the fairs between the drovers and the farmers with their whips, and the boys with cricket-bats and wickets, which arose out of a playful but objectionable practice of the boys going round to the public-houses and taking the linch-pins out of the wheels of the gigs, and was moralising on the way in which the Doctor, "a terrible stern man he'd heard tell," had come down upon several of the performers, "sending three on 'em off next morning, each in a po-chay with a parish constable," when they turned a corner and neared the milestone, the third from Rugby. By the stone two boys stood, their jackets buttoned tight, waiting for the coach.

"Look here, sir," says the guard, after giving a sharp toot-toot, "there's two on 'em, out and out runners they be. They comes out about twice or three times a-week, and spirits a mile alongside of us."

And as they came up, sure enough away went the two boys along the footpath, keeping up with the horses; the first, a light, clean-made fellow, going on springs, the other stout and round-shouldered, labouring in his pace, but going as dogged as a bull-terrier.

Old Blow-hard looked on admiringly. "See how beautiful that there 'un holds hisself together, and goes from his hips, sir," said he; "he's a 'mazin' fine runner. Now, many coachmen as drives a first-rate team'd put it on, and

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try and pass 'em. But Bob, sir, bless you, he's tender-hearted; he'd sooner pull in a bit if he see'd 'em a getting beat. I do b'lieve, too, as that there un'd sooner break his heart than let us go by him afore next milestone."

At the second milestone the boys pulled up short, and waved their hats to the guard, who had his watch out and shouted "4.56," thereby indicating that the mile had been done in four seconds under the five minutes. They passed several more parties of boys, all of them objects of the deepest interest to Tom, and came in sight of the town at ten minutes before twelve. Tom fetched a long breath, and thought he had never spent a pleasanter day. Before he went to bed he had quite settled that it must be the greatest day he should ever spend, and didn't alter his opinion for many a long year —if he has yet.

From "Tom Brown's Schooldays"

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CHARLES DICKENS

THERE was no Northern Railway at that time, and in its place there were stage-coaches; which I occasionally find myself, in common with some other people, affecting to lament now, but which everybody dreaded as a very serious penance then. I had secured the box-seat on the fastest of these, and my business in Fleet Street was to get into a cab with my portmanteau, so as to make the best of my way to the Peacock Inn at Islington, where I was to join this coach. But when one of our Temple watchmen, who carried my portmanteau into Fleet Street for me, told me about the huge blocks of ice that had for some days past been floating in the river, having closed up in the night and made a walk from the Temple gardens over to the Surrey shore, I began to ask myself the question whether the box-seat would not

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be likely to put a sudden and a frosty end to my unhappiness. I was heartbroken, it was true, and yet I was not quite so far gone as to wish to be frozen to death.

When I got up to the Peacock—where I found everybody drinking hot purl in self-preservation—I asked if there were an inside seat to spare. I then discovered that, inside or out, I was the only passenger. This gave me a still livelier idea of the great inclemency of the weather, since that coach always loaded particularly well. However I took a little purl (which I found uncommonly good), and got into the coach. When I was seated they built me up with straw to the waist, and, conscious of making a rather ridiculous appearance, I began my journey.

It was still dark when we left the Peacock. For a little while, pale, uncertain ghosts of houses and trees appeared and vanished, and then it was hard, black, frozen day. People were lighting their fires; smoke was mounting straight up high into the rarefied air; and we were rattling for Highgate Archway over the hardest ground I have ever heard the ring of iron shoes on. As we got into the country everything seemed to have grown old and grey. The roads, the trees, thatched roofs of cottages and homesteads, the ricks in farmer's yards. Out-door work was abandoned, horse troughs at roadside inns were frozen hard, no stragglers lounged about, doors were close shut, little turnpike houses had blazing fires inside, and children (even turnpike people have children, and seem to like them) rubbed the frost from the little panes of glass with their chubby arms, that their bright eyes might catch a glimpse of the solitary coach going by. I don't know when the snow began to set in; but I know that we were changing horses somewhere when I heard the guard remark, "That the old lady up in the sky was picking her geese pretty hard to-day." Then, indeed, I found the white down falling fast and thick.

The lonely day wore on, and I dozed it out, as a lonely

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traveller does. I was warm and valiant after eating and drinking,—particularly after dinner; cold and depressed at all other times. I was always bewildered as to time and place, and always more or less out of my senses. The coach and horses seemed to execute in chorus *Auld Lang Syne*, without a moment's intermission. They kept the time and tune with the greatest regularity, and rose into the swell at the beginning of the Refrain with a regularity that worried me to death. While we changed horses the guard and coachman went stumping up and down the road, printing off their shoes in the snow, and poured so much liquid consolation into themselves, without being any the worse for it, that I began to confound them, as it darkened again, with two great white casks standing on end. Our horses tumbled down in solitary places, and we got them up,—which was the pleasantest variety I had, for it warmed me. And it snowed and snowed, and still it snowed, and never left off snowing.

I forget where we were at noon on the second day, and where we ought to have been; but I know that we were scores of miles behindhand, and that our case was growing worse every hour. The drift was becoming prodigiously deep; landmarks were getting snowed out; the road and the fields were all one; instead of having fences and hedge-rows to guide us, we went crunching on over an unbroken surface of ghastly white that might sink beneath us at any moment and drop us down a whole hillside. Still the coachman and the guard, who kept together on the box, always in council; and looking well about them,—made out the track with astonishing sagacity.

When we came in sight of a town, it looked to my fancy like a large drawing on a slate, with abundance of slate-pencil expended on the churches and houses where the snow lay thickest. When we came within a town, and found the church clocks all stopped, the dial-faces choked with snow, and the inn-signs blotted out, it seemed as if the whole place

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were overgrown with white moss. As to the coach, it was a mere snow-ball; similarly the men and boys who ran along beside us to the town's end, turning our clogged wheels and encouraging our horses were men and boys of snow; and the bleak wild solitude to which they at last dismissed us was a snowy Sahara. One would have thought this enough; notwithstanding which, I pledge my word that it snowed and snowed, and never left off snowing.

We performed *Auld Lang Syne* the whole day; seeing nothing, out of towns and villages, but the track of stoats, hares and foxes, and sometimes of birds. At nine o'clock at night, on a Yorkshire moor, a cheerful burst from our horn, and a welcome sound of talking, with a glimmering and moving about of lanterns, roused me from my drowsy state. I found that we were going to change.

They helped me out, and I said to a waiter, whose bare head became as white as King Lear's in a single minute, "What Inn is this?"

"The Holly-Tree, Sir," said he.

"Upon my word, I believe," said I apologetically, to the guard and coachman, "that I must stop here."

Now the landlord, and the landlady, and the ostler, and the postboy, and all the stable authorities had already asked the coachman, to the wide-eyed interest of all the rest of the establishment, if he meant to go on. The coachman had already replied "Yes, he'd take her through it," meaning by Her the coach,—"if so be as George would stand by him." George was the guard, and he had already sworn that he *would* stand by him. So the helpers were already getting the horses out.

My declaring myself beaten after this parley was not an announcement without preparation. Indeed, but for the way to the announcement being smoothed by the parley, I more than doubt whether, as an innately bashful man, I should have had the confidence to make it. As it was, it received

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the approval even of the guard and coachman. Therefore with many confirmations of my inclining, and many remarks from one bystander to another, that the gentleman could go for'ard by the mail to-morrow, whereas to-night he would only be froze, and where was the good of a gentleman being froze?—ah! let alone buried alive (which latter clause was added by a humorous helper as a joke at my expense, and was extremely well received), I saw my portmanteau got out stiff, like a frozen body, did the handsome thing by the guard and coachman; wished them good-night and a prosperous journey; and, a little ashamed of myself, after all, for leaving them to fight it out alone, followed the landlord, landlady, and waiter of the Holly-Tree upstairs.

I thought that I had never seen such a large room as that into which they showed me. It had five windows, with dark red curtains that would have absorbed the light of a general illumination; and there were complications of drapery at the top of the curtains that went wandering about the wall in a most extraordinary manner. I asked for a smaller room and they told me there was no smaller room. They could screen me in, however, the landlord said. They brought a great old japanned screen, with natives (Japanese, I suppose) engaged in a variety of idiotic pursuits all over it; and left me roasting whole before an immense fire.

My bedroom was some quarter of a mile off, up a great staircase at the end of a long gallery; and nobody knows what a misery this is to a bashful man who would rather not meet people on the stairs. It was the grimmest room I have ever had the nightmare in; and all the furniture, from the four posts of the bed to the two old silver candlesticks, was tall, high-shouldered and spindle-waisted. Below, in my sitting-room, if I looked round my screen, the wind rushed at me like a mad bull; if I stuck to my arm-chair the fire scorched me to the colour of a new brick.

The chimney-piece was very high, and there was a bad

glass—what I may call a wavy glass—above it, which when I stood up, just showed me my anterior phrenological developments,—and these never look well, in any subject, cut short off at the eye-brow. If I stood with my back to the fire, a gloomy vault of darkness above and beyond the screen insisted on being looked at; and, in its dim remoteness the drapery of the ten curtains of the five windows went twisting and creeping about like a nest of gigantic worms. . . .

Trying to settle down, therefore, in my solitude, I first of all asked what books there were in the house. The waiter brought me a *Book of Roads*, two or three old Newspapers, a little Song-Book, terminating in a collection of Toasts and Sentiments, a little Jest Book, an odd volume of *Peregrine Pickle*, and the *Sentimental Journey*. I knew every word of the two last already, but I read them through again, then tried to hum all the songs, (*Auld Lang Syne* was among them); went entirely through the jokes,—in which I found a fund of melancholy adapted to my state of mind; proposed all the toasts, enunciated all the sentiments, and mastered the papers. The latter had nothing in them but stock advertisements, a meeting about a county rate, and a highway robbery. As I am a greedy reader, I could not make this supply hold out till night, it was exhausted by tea-time. Being then entirely cast upon my own resources, I got through an hour in considering what to do next. Ultimately it came into my head that I would endeavour to recall my experience of Inns, and would try how long it lasted me. I stirred the fire, moved my chair a little to one side of the screen,—not daring to go far, for I knew the wind was waiting to make a rush at me, I could hear it growling,—and began. . . . That was a good Inn down in Wiltshire where I put up once in the days of the hard Wiltshire ale, and before all beer was bitterness. It was on the skirts of Salisbury Plain, and the midnight wind that rattled my lattice window came moaning at me from Stonehenge. There was a hanger-on at that establish-

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ment (a supernaturally preserved Druid, I believe him to have been, and to be still), with long white hair, and a flinty blue eye, always looking afar off; who claimed to have been a shepherd, and who seemed to be ever watching for the re-appearance on the verge of the horizon, of some ghostly flock of sheep that had been mutton for many ages. He was a man with a weird belief in him that no-one could count the stones of Stonehenge twice, and make the same number of them; likewise that any one who counted them three times nine times, and then stood in the centre, and said "I dare!" would behold a tremendous apparition, and be stricken dead. He pretended to have seen a bustard (I suspect him to have been familiar with the dodo), in the manner following: He was out upon the plain at the close of a late autumn day, when he dimly discerned going on before him at a curious fitfully bounding pace, what he at first supposed to be a gig-umbrella, that had been blown from some conveyance, but what he presently believed to be a lean dwarf man upon a little pony. Having followed this object for some distance without gaining on it, and having called to it several times without receiving any answer, he pursued it for miles and miles, when, at length coming up with it, he discovered it to be the last bustard in Great Britain, degenerated into a wingless state, and running along the ground. Resolved to capture him, or perish in the attempt, he closed with the bustard; but the bustard, who had formed a counter resolution that he should do neither, threw him, stunned him, and was last seen making off due west. This weird man, at that stage of metempsychosis, may have been a sleep-walker or an enthusiast, or a robber; but I awoke one night to find him in the dark at my bed-side, repeating the Athanasian Creed in a terrific voice. I paid my bill next day, and retired from the county with all possible precipitation.

... Once I passed a fortnight at an Inn in the North of England, where I was haunted by the ghost of a tremendous

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pie. It was a Yorkshire pie, like a fort,—an abandoned fort, with nothing in it; but the waiter had a fixed idea that it was a point of ceremony at every meal to put the pie on the table. After some days I tried to hint, in several delicate ways, that I considered the pie done with; as for example, by emptying fag ends of glasses of wine into it; putting cheese plates and spoons into it, as into a basket; putting wine-bottles into it, as into a cooler; but all in vain, the pie being invariably cleaned out again and brought up as before. At last, beginning to be doubtful whether I was not the victim of a spectral illusion, and whether my health and spirits might not sink under the horrors of an imaginary pie, I cut a triangle out of it fully as large as the instrument of that name in a powerful orchestra. Human prevision could not have foreseen the result—but the waiter mended the pie. With some effectual species of cement, he adroitly fitted the triangle in again, and I paid my reckoning and fled.

The Holly-Tree was getting rather dismal. I made an overland expedition beyond the screen, and penetrated as far as the fourth window. Here I was driven back by stress of weather. Arrived at my winter-quarters once more, I made up the fire, and took another Inn.

It was in the remotest part of Cornwall. A great annual Miner's Feast was being holden at the Inn, when I and my travelling companions presented ourselves at night among the wild crowd that were dancing before it by torchlight. We had had a breakdown in the dark, on a stony morass some miles away; and I had the honour of leading one of the unharnessed post-horses. If any lady or gentleman on perusal of these present lines, will take any very tall post-horse, with his traces hanging about his legs, and will conduct him by the bearing-rein into the heart of a country dance of a hundred and fifty couples, that lady or gentleman will then, and then only, form an adequate idea of the extent to which that post-horse will tread on his conductor's toes. Over and

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above which, the post-horse, finding three hundred people whirling about him, will probably rear, and also lash out with his hind-legs in a manner incompatible with dignity or self-respect on his conductor's part. With such little drawbacks on my usually impressive aspect, I appeared at this Cornish Inn, to the unutterable wonder of the Cornish Miners. It was full, and twenty times full, and nobody could be received but the post-horse,—though to get rid of that noble animal was something. While my fellow-travellers and I were discussing how to pass the night and so much of the next day as must intervene before the jovial blacksmith and the jovial wheelwright would be in a condition to go out on the morass and mend the coach, an honest man stepped forth from the crowd, and proposed his unlet floor of two rooms, with supper of eggs and bacon, ale and punch. We joyfully accompanied him home to the strangest of clean houses, where we were well entertained to the satisfaction of all parties. But the novel feature of the entertainment was, that our host was a chairmaker, and that the chairs assigned to us were mere frames altogether without bottoms of any sort; so that we passed the evening on perches. Nor was this the absurd consequence, for when we unbent at supper, and any one of us gave way to laughter, he forgot the peculiarity of his position and instantly disappeared. I myself doubled up in an attitude from which self-extrication was impossible, was taken out of my frame like a clown in a comic pantomime who has tumbled into a tub, five times by the taper's light during the eggs and bacon.

. . . This reminiscence brought the Welsh Inns in general before me; with the women in their round hats, and the harpers with their white beards (venerable, but humbugs, I am afraid), playing outside the door while I took my dinner. The transition was natural to the Highland Inns, with the oatmeal bannocks, the honey, the venison steaks, and perhaps (having the materials so temptingly at hand)

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the Athol brose. Once was I coming south from the Scottish Highlands in hot haste, hoping to change quickly at the station at the bottom of a certain wild historical glen, when these eyes did with mortification see the landlord come out with a telescope and sweep the whole prospect for the horses; which horses were away picking up their own living, and did not heave in sight under four hours. Having thought of the loch trout, I was taken by quick association to the Anglers' Inns of England (I have assisted at innumerable feats of angling by lying in the bottom of the boat, whole summer days, doing nothing with the greatest perseverance; which I have generally found to be as effectual towards the taking of fish as the finest tackle and the utmost science), and to the pleasant, white, clean, flowerpot-decorated bedrooms of those inns, overlooking the river, and the ferry, and the green ait, and the church-spire, and the country bridge and to the peerless Emma with the bright eyes and the pretty smile, who waited, bless her! with a natural grace that would have converted Bluebeard. Casting my eyes upon my Holly-Tree fire, I next discerned among the glowing coals the pictures of a score or more of those wonderful posting-inns, which we are all so sorry to have lost, which were so large, and so comfortable, and which were such monuments of British submission to rapacity and extortion. He who would see these houses pining away, let him walk from Basingstoke or even from Windsor, to London, by way of Hounslow, and moralize on their perishing remains; the stables crumbling to dust; unsettled labourers and wanderers bivouacking in the outhouses; grass growing in the yards; the rooms, where erst so many hundred beds of down were made up, let off to Irish lodgers at eighteenpence a week; a little ill-looking beer-shop shrinking in the tap of former days, burning coach-house doors for firewood, having one of its two windows bunged up, as if it had received punishment in a fight with the Railroad; a low, bandy-legged,

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brick-making bull-dog standing in the doorway. What could I next see in my fire so naturally as the new railway-house of these times near the dismal country station; with nothing particular on draught but cold air and damp, nothing worth mentioning in the larder but new mortar, and no business doing beyond a conceited affectation of luggage in the hall?

From "The Holly-tree"

EFFECTS OF THE RAILWAYS ON A COUNTRY TOWN

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

THE town of Courcy—for the place claimed to rank as a town—was in many particulars like the castle. It was built of dingy-red brick—almost more brown than red—and was solid, dull-looking, ugly and comfortable. It consisted of four streets; which were formed by two roads crossing each other, making at the point of junction a centre for the town. Here stood the Red Lion; had it been called the brown lion, the nomenclature would have been more correct; and here, in the old days of coaching, some life had been wont to stir itself at those hours in the day and night when the Free-traders, Tallyhoes, and Royal Mails changed their horses. But now there was a railway station a mile and a half distant, and the moving life of the town of Courcy was confined to the Red Lion omnibus, which seemed to pass its entire time in going up and down between the town and the station, quite unembarrassed by any great weight of passengers.

There were, so said the Courcyites when away from Courcy, excellent shops in the place; but they were not the less accustomed when at home among themselves, to complain to each other of the vile extortion with which they were treated by their neighbours. The ironmonger, therefore,

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though he loudly asserted that he could beat Bristol in the quality of his wares in one direction and undersell Gloucester in another, bought his tea and sugar on the sly in one of those larger towns; and the grocer, on the other hand, equally distrusted the pots and pans of home production. Trade, therefore, at Courcy had not thriven since the railway had opened: and, indeed, had any patient inquirer stood at the cross through one entire day, counting the customers who entered the neighbouring shops, he might well have wondered that any shops in Courcy could be kept open.

And how changed has been the bustle of that once noisy inn to the present death-like silence of its green court-yard! There a lame ostler crawls about with his hand thrust into the capacious pockets of his jacket, feeding on memory. That weary pair of omnibus jades, and three sorry posters, are all that now grace those stables where horses used to be stalled in close contiguity by the dozen; where twenty grains apiece abstracted from every feed of oats consumed during the day, would have afforded a daily quart to the lucky pilferer.

Come, my friend, and discourse with me. Let us know what are thy ideas of the inestimable benefits which science has conferred on us in these, our latter days. How dost thou, among other, appreciate railways and the power of steam, telegraphs, telegrams, and our new expresses? But indifferently, you say. "Time was I've zeed fifteen pair o' 'osses go out o' this 'ere yeard in your-and-twenty hour; and now there be'ant fifteen, no, not ten, in your-and-twenty days! There was the duik—not this 'un; he be'ant no gude; but this 'un's vather—why, when he'd come down the road, the cattle did be a'going, your days an eend. Here'd be the tooter and the young gen'lemen, and the governess and the young leddies, and there the servants—they'd be al'ays the grandest folk of all—and then the duik and the doochess—Lord love 'ee, zur, the money did fly in them days! But now,—" The feeling of scorn and contempt which the

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lame ostler was enabled by his native talent to throw into that word 'now' was quite as eloquent against the power of steam as anything that has been spoken at dinners, or written in pamphlets by the keenest admirers of latter-day lights.

"Why, luke at this 'ere town," continued he of the sieve, "the grass be a'growing in the very streets; that can't be no good. Why, luke 'ee here, zur; I do be a'standing at this 'ere gateway, just this way, hour arter hour, and my heyes is open mostly; I zees who's a'coming and who's a'going. Nobody's a'coming, and nobody's a'going; that can't be no gude. Luke at that there omnibus; why, darn me——" and now in his eloquence at this peculiar point my friend became more loud and powerful than ever—"why, darn me, if maister harns enough with that there buss to put hiron on them there 'osses' feet, I'll—be—blowed!" And as he uttered this hypothetical denunciation of himself he spoke very slowly, bringing out each word as it were separately, and, lowering himself at the knees at every sound, moving at the same time his right hand up and down. When he had finished, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, pointing downwards, as if there was to be the site of his doom if the curse that he had called down upon himself should come to pass: and then, waiting no further converse, he hobbled away melancholy, to his deserted stables.

Oh, my friend! my poor lame friend, it will avail nothing to tell thee of Liverpool and Manchester; of the glories of Glasgow, with her flourishing banks; of London with its third million of inhabitants; of the great things which commerce is doing for this nation of thine! What is commerce to thee, unless it is commerce in posting on that worn-out, all but useless, great western turnpike road? There is nothing left for thee but to be carted away as rubbish—for thee, and for many of us in these now prosperous days; oh, my melancholy, care-ridden friend!

From "Doctor Thorne"

ODDITIES

A PAIR OF 'ORIGINALS'

SIR WALTER SCOTT

AMID a heap of books and other literary lumber, which had accumulated round him, sat, in his well-worn leathern elbow-chair, the learned minister of St Ronan's; a thin, spare man beyond the middle age, of a dark complexion, but with eyes, which, though now obscured and vacant, had once been bright, soft, and expressive, and whose features seemed interesting, the rather that, notwithstanding the carelessness of his dress, he was in the habit of performing his ablutions with Eastern precision; for he had forgot neatness but not cleanliness. His hair might have appeared much more disorderly, had it not been thinned by time, and disposed chiefly around the sides of his countenance and the back part of his head; black stockings, ungartered, marked his professional dress, and his feet were thrust into old slip-shod shoes which served him instead of slippers. The rest of his garments, so far as visible, consisted in a plaid nightgown wrapt in long folds round his stooping and emaciated length of body, and reaching down to the slippers aforesaid. He was so intently engaged in studying the book before him, a folio of no ordinary bulk, that he totally disregarded the noise which Mr Touchwood made in entering the room, as well as the coughs and hems, with which he thought it proper to announce his presence.

No notice being taken of these inarticulate signals, Mr Touchwood, however great an enemy he was to ceremony, saw the necessity of introducing his business as an apology for his intrusion.

"Hem! sir—ha, hem!—you see before you a person

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in some distress for want of society, who has taken the liberty to call on you as a good pastor, who may be, in Christian charity, willing to afford him a little of your company, since he is tired of his own."

Of this speech Mr Cargill only understood the words "distress" and "charity," sounds with which he was well acquainted, and which never failed to produce some effect on him. He looked at his visitor with lack-lustre eye, and, without correcting the first opinion he had formed, though the stranger's plump and sturdy frame, as well as his nicely brushed coat, glancing cane, and, above all, his upright and self-satisfied manner, resembled in no respect the dress, form, or bearing of a mendicant, he quietly thrust a shilling into his hand, and relapsed into the studious contemplation which the entrance of Touchwood had interrupted.

"Upon my word, my good sir," said his visitor, surprised at a degree of absence of mind which he could hardly have conceived possible, "you have entirely mistaken my object."

"I am sorry my mite is insufficient, my friend," said the clergyman, without again raising his eyes, "it is all I have at present to bestow."

"If you will have the kindness to look up for a moment, my good sir," said the traveller, "you may possibly perceive that you labour under a considerable mistake."

Mr Cargill raised his head, recalled his attention, and, seeing that he had a well-dressed, respectable-looking person before him, he exclaimed in much confusion, "Ha!—yes—on my word I was so immersed in my book—I believe—I think I have the pleasure to see my worthy friend Mr Lavender?"

"No such thing, Mr Cargill," replied Mr Touchwood. "I will save you the trouble of trying to recollect me—you never saw me before. But do not let me disturb your studies—I am in no hurry, and my business can wait your leisure."

"I am much obliged," said Mr Cargill; "have the goodness

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to take a chair, if you can find one—I have a train of thought to recover—a slight calculation to finish—and then I am at your command."

. . . A long pause of total silence ensued, only disturbed by the rustling leaves of the folio from which Mr Cargill seemed to be making extracts, and now and then by a little exclamation of impatience, when he dipped his pen, as happened once or twice, into his snuff-box, instead of the ink-stand which stood beside it. At length, just as Mr Touchwood began to think the scene as tedious as it was singular, the abstracted student raised his head and spoke as if in soliloquy, "From Acon, Accor, or St John of Acre, to Jerusalem, how far?"

"Twenty-three miles north-north-west," answered his visitor, without hesitation.

Mr Cargill expressed no more surprise at a question which he had put to himself being answered by another, than if he had found the distance on the map, and, indeed, was not probably aware of the medium through which his question had been solved; and it was the tenor of the answer alone that he attended to in his reply.—"Twenty-three miles—Ingulphus," laying his hand on the volume, "and Jeffrey Winesauf do not agree in this."

"They may both be d—d then, for lying blockheads," answered the traveller.

"You might have contradicted their authority, sir, without using such an expression," said the divine gravely.

"I cry you mercy, Doctor," said Mr Touchwood, "but would you compare these parchment fellows with me, that have made my legs my compasses over great part of the inhabited world?"

"You have been in Palestine, then?" said Mr Cargill, drawing himself upright in his chair, and speaking with eagerness and with interest.

"You may swear that, Doctor, and at Acre too. Why, I

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was there the month after Boney found it too hard a nut to crack.—I dined with Sir Sidney's chum—old Djezzar Pacha, and an excellent dinner we had, but for a desert of noses and ears brought on after the last remove, which spoiled my digestion. Old Djezzar thought it so good a joke, that you hardly saw a man in Acre whose face was not as flat as the palm of my hand. Gad, I respect my olfactory organ, and set off the next morning as fast as the most cursed hard-trotting dromedary that ever fell to poor pilgrim's lot could contrive to tramp."

"If you have really been in the Holy Land, sir," said Mr Cargill, whom the reckless gaiety of Touchwood's manner rendered somewhat suspicious of a trick, "you will be able materially to enlighten me on the subject of the Crusades."

"They happened before my time, Doctor," replied the traveller.

"You are to understand that my curiosity refers to the geography of the countries where these events took place," answered Mr Cargill.

"Oh! as to that matter, you are lighted on your feet," said Mr Touchwood; "for the time present I can fit you. Turk, Arab, Copt and Druse, I know every one of them, and can make you as well acquainted with them as myself. Without stirring a step beyond your threshold, you shall know Syria as well as I do. But one good turn deserves another—in that case you must dine with me."

"I go seldom abroad, sir," said the minister, with a good deal of hesitation, for his habits of solitude and seclusion could not be entirely overcome, even by the expectation raised by the traveller's discourse, "yet I cannot deny myself the pleasure of waiting on a gentleman possessed of so much experience."

"Well then," said Mr Touchwood, "three be the hour—I never dine later, and always to a minute—and the place, the Cleikum Inn, up the way; where Mrs Dods is at this

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moment busy in making ready such a dinner as your learning has seldom seen, Doctor, for I brought the receipts from the four different quarters of the globe."

Upon this treaty they parted, and Mr Cargill, after musing for a short while on the singular chance that had sent a living man to answer those doubts for which he was in vain consulting ancient authorities, at length resumed by degrees, the train of reflection and investigation which Mr Touchwood's visit had interrupted, and in a short while lost all recollection of his episodical visitor, and of the engagement which he had formed.

Not so Mr Touchwood, who, when not occupied with business of real importance had the art, as the reader may have observed, of making a prodigious fuss of nothing at all. Upon the present occasion he hustled in and out of the kitchen till Mrs Dods lost patience, and threatened to pin the dish-clout to his tail . . . he therefore retreated from the torrid region of Mrs Dods' microcosm, and employed his time in the usual devices of loiterers, partly by walking for an appetite, partly by observing the progress of his watch towards three o'clock, when he had happily succeeded in getting an employment more serious. His table in the blue parlour was displayed with two covers after the fairest fashion of the Cleikum Inn. . . . The fated hour arrived and brought with it no Mr Cargill. The impatient entertainer allowed five minutes for difference in clocks, and variation of time, and other five for the procrastination of one who went little into society. But no sooner were the last five minutes expended, than he darted off for the manse, not, indeed, much like a greyhound or a deer, but with the momentum of a corpulent and well-appetized elderly gentleman who is in a hurry to secure his dinner.

He bounced without ceremony into the parlour where he found the worthy divine clothed in the same plaid night-gown, and seated in the very same elbow-chair where he had left him five hours before. His sudden entrance recalled to

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Mr Cargill, not an accurate, but something of a general recollection, of what had passed in the morning, and he hastened to apologize. . . .

In a short time the minister was dressed in his Sunday's suit, without any further mistake than turning one of his black stockings inside out; and Mr Touchwood, happy as was Boswell when he carried off Dr Johnson in triumph to dine with Strachan and John Wilkes, had the pleasure of escorting him to the Cleikum Inn.

From "St Ronan's Well"

THE INNS OF COURT

I. THE TEMPLE

W. M. THACKERAY

COLLEGES, schools, and Inns of Court still have some respect for antiquity, and maintain a great number of the customs and institutions of our ancestors, with which those persons who do not particularly regard their forefathers, or perhaps are not very well acquainted with them, have long since done away. A well-ordained workhouse or prison is much better provided with the appliances of health, comfort and cleanliness, than a respectable Foundation school, a venerable College, or a learned Inn. In the latter place of residence men are contented to sleep in dingy closets, and to pay for the sitting-room and the cupboard, which is their dormitory, the price of a good villa and garden in the suburbs, or of a roomy house in the neglected squares of the town. The poorest mechanic in Spitalfields has a cistern and an unbounded supply of water at his command; but the gentlemen of the Inns of Court, and the gentlemen of the Universities, have their supply of this cosmetic fetched in jugs by laundresses and bed-makers, and live in abodes which were erected long before the custom of cleanliness and decency

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obtained among us. There are individuals still alive who sneer at the people, and speak of them with epithets of scorn. Gentlemen, there can be but little doubt that your ancestors were the great unwashed; and, in the Temple especially, it is certain that, only under the greater difficulties and restrictions, the virtue that has been pronounced to be next to godliness could have been practised at all.

Old Grump, of the Norfolk Circuit, who had lived for more than thirty years in the chambers under those occupied by Warrington and Pendennis, and who used to be awakened by the roaring of the shower-baths which those gentlemen had erected in their apartments—part of the contents of which occasionally trickled through the roof into Mr Grump's room—declared that the practice was an absurd, new-fangled, dandified folly, and daily cursed the laundress who slopped the staircase by which he had to pass. Grump, now much more than half a century old, had indeed never used the luxury in question. He had done without water very well, and so had our fathers before him. Of all those knights and baronets, lords and gentlemen, bearing arms, whose escutcheons are painted upon the walls of the famous hall of the Upper Temple, was there no philanthropist good-natured enough to devise a set of Hummums for the benefit of the lawyers, his fellows and successors? The Temple historian makes no mention of such a scheme. There is Pump Court and Fountain Court, with their hydraulic apparatus; but one never heard of a bencher disporting in the fountain, and can't but think how many a counsel learned in the law of old days might have benefited by the pump.

Nevertheless, those venerable Inns, which have the Lamb and Flag and the Winged Horse for their ensigns, have attractions for persons who inhabit them, and a share of rough comforts and freedom, which men always remember with pleasure. I don't know whether the student of law permits himself the refreshment of enthusiasm, or indulges in poetical

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reminiscences as he passes by historical chambers, and says "Yonder Eldon lived—upon this site Coke mused upon Lyttleton—here Chitty toiled—here Barnwell and Alderson joined in their famous labours—here Byles composed his great work upon bills, and Smith compiled his immortal leading cases—here Gustavus still toils with Soloman to aid him"; but the man of letters can't but love the place which has been inhabited by so many of his brethren, or peopled by their creations, as real to us at this day as the authors whose children they were—and Sir Roger de Coverley walking in the Temple garden and discoursing with Mr Spectator about the beauties in hoops and patches who are sauntering over the grass, is just as lively a figure to me as old Samuel Johnson, rolling through the fog with the Scotch gentleman at his heels on their way to Dr Goldsmith's chambers in Brick Court; or Harry Fielding, with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight for the *Covent Garden Journal*, while the printer's boy is asleep in the passage.

If we could but get the history of a single day as it passed in any one of those four-storied houses in the dingy court where our friends Pen and Warrington dwelt, some Temple Asmodeus might furnish us with a queer volume. There may be a great Parliamentary counsel on the ground floor, who drives off to Belgravia at dinner-time when his clerk, too, becomes a gentleman, and goes away to entertain his friends, and to take his leisure. But a short time since he was hungry and briefless in some garret of the Inn; lived by stealthy literature; hoped and waited, and sickened, but no clients came; exhausted his own means and his friends' kindness; had to remonstrate humbly with duns, and to implore the patience of poor creditors. Ruin seemed to be staring him in the face, when, behold, a turn of the wheel of fortune, and the lucky wretch in possession of one of those prodigious prizes which are sometimes drawn in the great lottery of the Bar. Many a better lawyer than himself does

not make a fifth part of the income of his clerk, who, a few months since, could scarcely get credit for pocketing for his master's unpaid losses. On the first floor, past up, you will have a venerable man whose name is Farmer, who has lived for half a century in the Inn, whose brain is full of books, and whose shelves are studded with classical and legal lore. He has lived alone all these fifty years, alone, and for himself, amassing learning and compiling a fortune. He comes home now at night alone from the club, where he has been dining freely, to the lonely chambers where he lives a paddock old recluse. When he dies his Inn will erect a tablet to his memory, and his heirs burn a part of his library. Would you like to have such a prospect for your old age—in store up learning and money, and enjoy it? But we must not linger too long by Mr Doomsday's door. Worthily Mr Grump lives over him, who is also an ancient inhabitant of the Inn, and who, when Doomsday comes home to read Catullus, is sitting down with three steady seniors of his standing, to a steady rubbet of whist, after a dinner at which they have consumed their three steady bottles of port. You may see the old boys asleep at the Temple Church on a Sunday. Attorneys seldom trouble them, and they have small fortunes of their own. On the other side of the third landing, where Pen and Warrington live, till long after midnight sits Mr Paley, who took the highest honours and is a fellow of his College, who will sit and read, and note cases until two o'clock in the morning; who will rise at seven, and be at the pleader's chambers as soon as they are open, where he will work until an hour before dinner-time; who will come home from Hall, and read and note cases again until dawn next day, when perhaps Mr Arthur Pendennis and his friend Mr Warrington are returning from some of their wild expeditions. How differently employed Mr Paley has been! He has not been throwing himself away; he has only been bringing a great intellect down to the comprehension of a

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mean subject, and in his fierce grasp of that, resolutely excluding from his mind all higher thoughts, all better things, all the wisdom of philosophers and historians, all the thoughts of poets—all wit, fancy, reflection, art, love, truth altogether—so that he may master that enormous legend of the law, which he proposes to gain his living by expounding. Warrington and Paley had been competitors for University honours in former days, and had run each other hard; and everybody said now that the former was wasting his time and energies, whilst all people praised Paley for his industry. There may be doubts, however, as to which was using his time best. The one could afford time to think, and the other never could. The one could have sympathies, and do kindnesses, and the other must needs be always selfish. He could not cultivate a friendship or do a charity, or admire a work of genius, or kindle at the sight of beauty or the sound of a sweet song—he had no time and no eyes for anything but his law-books. All was dark outside his reading-lamp. Love, and Nature, and Art (which is the expression of our praise and sense of the beautiful world of God), were shut out from him. And as he turned off his lonely lamp at night, he never thought but that he had spent the day profitably, and went to sleep, alike thankless and remorseless. But he shuddered when he met his old companion Warrington on the stairs, and shunned him as one that was doomed to perdition.

From "Pendennis"

II. HOLBORN COURT—GRAY'S INN

CHARLES DICKENS

NUMBER two in the Court was soon reached; and an inscription on the door-post informing me that Mr Traddles occupied a set of chambers on the top story, I ascended the staircase. A crazy old staircase I found it to be, feebly

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lighted on each landing by a club-headed little oil-wick, dying away in a little dungeon of dirty glass.

In the course of my stumbling upstairs, I fancied I heard a pleasant sound of laughter; and not the laughter of an attorney or barrister, or attorney's clerk or barrister's clerk, but of two or three merry girls. Happening, however, as I stopped to listen, to put my foot in a hole where the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn had left a plank deficient, I fell down with some noise, and when I recovered my footing all was silent.

Groping my way more carefully for the rest of the journey, my heart beat high when I found the outer door which had MR TRADDLES painted on it, open. I knocked. A considerable scuffling within ensued, but nothing else. I therefore knocked again.

A small sharp-looking lad, half-footboy and half-clerk, who was very much out of breath, but who looked at me as if he defied me to prove it legally, presented himself.

"Is Mr Traddles within?" I said.

"Yes, sir, but he's engaged."

"I want to see him."

After a moment's survey of me, the sharp-looking lad decided to let me in; and opening the door wider for that purpose, admitted me, first, into a little closet of a hall, and next into a little sitting-room; where I came into the presence of my old friend (also out of breath), seated at a table, and bending over papers.

"Good God!" cried Traddles, looking up. "It's Copperfield!" and rushed into my arms, where I held him tight.

"All well, my dear Traddles?"

"All well, my dear, dear Copperfield, and nothing but good news!"

We cried with pleasure, both of us.

"My dear fellow," cried Traddles, rumpling his hair in his excitement, which was a most unnecessary operation,

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"my dearest Copperfield, my long-lost and most welcome friend, how glad I am to see you! How brown you are! How glad I am! Upon my life and honour, I never was so rejoiced, my beloved Copperfield, never!"

I was equally at a loss to express my emotions. I was quite unable to speak at first.

"My dear fellow!" said Traddles. "And grown so famous! My glorious Copperfield! Good gracious me, when did you come, where have you come from, what have you been doing?"

Never pausing for an answer to anything he said, Traddles, who had clapped me into an easy chair by the fire, all this time impetuously stirred the fire with one hand, and pulled at my neckerchief with the other, under some wild delusion that it was a greatcoat. Without putting down the poker, he now hugged me again; and I hugged him; and, both laughing, and both wiping our eyes, we both sat down, and shook hands across the hearth.

"To think," said Traddles, "that you should have been so nearly coming home, as you must have been, my dear old boy, and not at the ceremony!"

"What ceremony, my dear Traddles?"

"Good gracious me!" cried Traddles, opening his eyes in his old way. "Didn't you get my last letter?"

"Certainly not, if it referred to any ceremony."

"Why, my dear Copperfield," cried Traddles, sticking his hair upright with both hands, and then putting his hands on my knees, "I am married!"

"Married!" I cried joyfully.

"Lord bless me, yes!" said Traddles—"by the Rev. Horace—to Sophy—down in Devonshire. Why, my dear boy, she's behind the window curtain! Look here!"

To my amazement, the dearest girl in the world came at that same instant, laughing and blushing, from her place of concealment. And a more cheerful, amiable, honest, happy,

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bright-looking bride, I believe (as I could not help saying on the spot) the world never saw. I kissed her as an old acquaintance should, and wished them joy with all the might of my heart.

"Dear me," said Traddles, "what a delightful reunion this is! You are so extremely brown, my dear Copperfield! God bless my soul, how happy I am!"

"And so am I!" said I.

"And I am sure I am!" said the blushing and laughing Sophy.

"We are all as happy as possible!" said Traddles. "Even the girls are happy! Dear me, I declare I forgot them!"

"Forgot?" said I.

"The girls," said Traddles. "Sophy's sisters. They are staying with us. They have come to have a peep at London. The fact is, when—was it you who tumbled upstairs, Copperfield?"

"It was," said I, laughing.

"Well then, when you tumbled upstairs," said Traddles, "I was romping with the girls. In point of fact we were playing at Puss in the Corner. But as that wouldn't do in Westminster Hall, and as it wouldn't look quite professional if they were seen by a client, they decamped. And they are now—listening, I have no doubt," said Traddles, glancing at the door of another room.

"I am sorry," said I, laughing afresh, "to have occasioned such a dispersion."

"Upon my word," said Traddles, greatly delighted, "if you had seen them running away, and running back again, after you had knocked, to pick up the combs they had dropped out of their hair, and going on in the maddest manner, you wouldn't have said so. My love, will you fetch the girls?"

Sophy tripped away, and we heard her received in the adjoining room with a peal of laughter.

"Really musical, isn't it, my dear Copperfield?" said

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Traddles. "It's very agreeable to hear. It quite lights up these old rooms. To an unfortunate bachelor of a fellow, who has lived alone all his life, you know, it's positively delicious. It's charming. Poor things, they have had a great loss in Sophy—who, I do assure you, Copperfield, is, and ever was, the dearest girl!—and it gratifies me beyond expression to find them in such good spirits. The society of girls is a very delightful thing, Copperfield. It's not professional, but it's very delightful."

Observing that he slightly faltered, and comprehending that in the goodness of his heart he was fearful of giving me some pain by what he had said, I expressed my concurrence with a heartiness that evidently relieved and pleased him greatly.

"But then," said Traddles, "our domestic arrangements are, to say the truth, quite unprofessional altogether, my dear Copperfield. Even Sophy's being here, is unprofessional. And we have no other place of abode. We have put to sea in a cockboat, but we are quite prepared to rough it. And Sophy's an extraordinary manager! You'll be surprised how those girls are stowed away. I am sure I hardly know how it is done!"

"Are there many of the young ladies with you?" I inquired.

"The eldest, the Beauty, is here," said Traddles, in a low-confidential voice, "Caroline. And Sarah's here—the one I mentioned to you as having something the matter with her spine, you know. Immensely better! And the two youngest that Sophy educated are with us. And Louisa's here."

"Indeed!" cried I.

"Yes," said Traddles. "Now the whole set—I mean the chambers is only three rooms; but Sophy arranges for the girls in the most wonderful way, and they sleep as comfortably as possible. Three in that room," said Traddles, pointing. "Two in that."

I could not help glancing round in search of the accom-

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modation remaining for Mr and Mrs Traddles. Traddles understood me.

"Well," said Traddles, "we are prepared to rough it, as I said just now, and we did improvise a bed last week, upon the floor here. But there's a little room in the roof—a very nice room when you are up there—which Sophy papered herself, to surprise me; and that's our room at present. It's a capital little gipsy sort of place. There's quite a view from it."

"And you are happily married at last, my dear Traddles!" said I. "How rejoiced I am!"

"Thank you, my dear Copperfield," said Traddles, and we shook hands once more. "Yes, I am as happy as it's possible to be. There's your old friend, you see," said Traddles, nodding triumphantly at the flower-pot and stand; "and there's the table with the marble top! All the other furniture is plain and serviceable, you perceive. And as to plate, Lord bless you, we haven't so much as a teaspoon."

"All to be earned?" I said cheerfully.

"Exactly so," replied Traddles, "all to be earned. Of course we have something in the shape of tea-spoons, because we stir our tea. But they're Britannia metal."

"The silver will be the brighter when it comes," said I.

"The very thing we say!" cried Traddles. "You see, my dear Copperfield," falling again into the low and confidential tone, "after I had delivered my argument in *Doe dem. JIPES versus WIGZELL*, which did me great service with the profession, I went down into Devonshire, and had some serious conversation in private with the Reverend Horace. I dwelt upon the fact that Sophy—who I do assure you, Copperfield, is the dearest girl!—"

"I am certain she is!" said I.

"She is, indeed!" rejoined Traddles. "But I am afraid I am wandering from the subject. Did I mention the Reverend Horace?"

"You said you dwelt upon the fact—"

"True! Upon the fact that Sophy and I had been engaged for a long period, and that Sophy, with the permission of her parents was more than willing to take me—in short," said Traddles, with his old frank smile, "on our present Britannia-metal footing. Very well. I then proposed to the Reverend Horace—who is a most excellent clergyman, Copperfield, and ought to be a Bishop; or at least to have enough to live upon without pinching himself—that if I could turn the corner, say of two hundred and fifty pounds, in one year; and could see my way pretty clearly to that, or something better, next year; and could plainly furnish a little place like this, besides; then, and in that case, Sophy and I should be united. I took the liberty of representing that we had been patient for a good many years; and that the circumstance of Sophy's being extraordinarily useful at home, ought not to operate with her affectionate parents, against her establishment in life—don't you see?"

"Certainly, it ought not," said I.

"I am glad you think so, Copperfield," rejoined Traddles, "because without any imputation on the Reverend Horace, I do think parents, and brothers, and so forth, are sometimes rather selfish in such cases. Well! I also pointed out, that my most earnest desire was, to be useful to the family; and if I got on in the world, and anything should happen to him—I refer to the Reverend Horace——"

"I understand," said I.

"Or to Mrs Crewler—it would be the utmost gratification of my wishes to be a parent to the girls. He replied in a most admirable manner, exceedingly flattering to my feelings, and undertook to obtain the consent of Mrs Crewler to this arrangement. They had a dreadful time of it with her. It mounted from her legs into her chest, and then into her head——"

"What mounted?" I asked.

"Her grief," replied Traddles, with a serious look. "Her

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feelings generally. As I mentioned on a former occasion, she is a very superior woman, but has lost the use of her limbs. Whatever occurs to harass her, usually settles in her legs; but on this occasion it mounted to the chest and then to the head, and in short, pervaded the whole system in the most alarming manner. However, they brought her through it by unremitting and affectionate attention; and we were married yesterday six weeks. You have no idea what a Monster I felt, Copperfield, when I saw the whole family crying and fainting away in every direction! Mrs Crewler couldn't see me before we left—couldn't forgive me, then, for depriving her of her child—but she is a good creature, and has done so since. I had a delightful letter from her only this morning."

"And in short, my dear friend, you feel as blest as you deserve to feel!"

"Oh! That's your partiality!" laughed Traddles. "But indeed I am in a most enviable state. I work hard, and read Law insatiably. I get up at five every morning, and don't mind it at all. I hide the girls in the day-time, and make merry with them in the evening. And I assure you that I am quite sorry that they are going home on Tuesday, which is the day before the first day of Michaelmas Term. But here," said Traddles, breaking off in his confidence, and speaking aloud, "*are* the girls! Mr Copperfield, Miss Crewler—Miss Sarah—Miss Louisa—Margaret and Lucy!"

They were a perfect nest of roses; they looked so wholesome and fresh. They were all pretty, and Miss Caroline very handsome; but there was a loving, cheerful, fireside quality in Sophy's bright looks, that was better than that, and which assured me that my friend had chosen well. We all sat round the fire, while the sharp boy, who, I now divined had lost his breath in putting the papers out, cleared them away again, and produced the tea-things. After that he retired for the night, shutting the outer door upon us with a bang. Mrs Traddles, with perfect pleasure and composure

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beaming on us from her household eyes, having made the tea, then quietly made the toast, as she sat in a corner by the fire.

She had seen Agnes, she told me while she was toasting. "Tom" had taken her down to Kent for a wedding trip, and there she had seen my aunt, too; and both my aunt and Agnes were well, and they had all talked of nothing but me. "Tom" had never had me out of his thoughts, she really believed, all the time I had been away. "Tom" was the authority for everything. "Tom" was evidently the idol of her life; never to be shaken on his pedestal by any commotion; always to be believed in, and done homage to with the whole faith of her heart, come what might.

The deference which both she and Traddles showed towards the Beauty, pleased me very much. I don't know that I thought it very reasonable; but I thought it very delightful, and essentially a part of their character. If Traddles ever for an instant missed the tea-spoons that were still to be won, I have no doubt it was when he handed the Beauty her tea. If his sweet-tempered wife could have got up any self-assertion against anyone, I am satisfied that it could only have been because she was the Beauty's sister. A few slight indications of a rather petted and capricious manner, which I observed in the Beauty, were manifestly considered, by Traddles and his wife, as her birthright and natural endowment. If she had been born a Queen Bee, and they labouring Bees, they could not have been more satisfied of that.

But their self-forgetfulness charmed me. Their pride in these girls, and their submission of themselves to all their whims, was the pleasantest little testimony to their own worth, I could have desired to see. If Traddles were addressed as a "darling," once in the course of that evening, and besought to bring something here, or carry something there, or take something up, or put something down, or find something, or fetch something, he was so addressed by one or other of his sisters-in-law at least twelve times in an hour.

Neither could they do anything without Sophy. Somebody's hair fell down, and nobody but Sophy could put it up. Somebody forgot how a particular tune went, and nobody but Sophy could hum that tune right. Somebody wanted to recall the name of a place in Devonshire, and only Sophy knew it. Something was wanted to be written home, and only Sophy could be trusted to write before breakfast in the morning. Somebody broke down in a piece of knitting, and no one but Sophy was able to put the defaulter in the right direction. They were entirely mistresses of the place, and Sophy and Traddles waited on them. How many children Sophy could have taken care of in her time, I can't imagine; but she seemed to be famous for knowing every sort of song that ever was addressed to a child in the English tongue; and she sung dozens to order with the clearest little voice in the world, one after another (every sister issuing directions for a different tune, and the Beauty generally striking in last), so that I was quite fascinated. The best of all, was that, in the midst of all their exactions, all the sisters had a great tenderness and respect both for Sophy and Traddles. I am sure, when I took my leave, and Traddles was coming out to walk with me to the coffee-house, I thought I had never seen an obstinate head of hair, or any other head of hair, rolling about in such a shower of kisses.

Altogether, it was a scene I could not help dwelling on with pleasure for a long time after I got back, and had wished Traddles good-night. If I had beheld a thousand roses blowing in a top set of chambers in that withered Gray's Inn, they could not have brightened it half so much. The idea of those Devonshire girls, among the dry law-stationers and the attorneys' offices; and of the tea and toast, and children's songs, in that grim atmosphere of pounce and parchment, red-tape, dusty waters, ink-jars, brief and draft paper, law reports, writs, declarations, and bills of costs, seemed almost as pleasantly fanciful as if I had dreamed that the Sultan's

MR JINGLE

famous family had been admitted on the roll of attorneys, and had brought the talking bird, the singing tree and the golden water into Gray's Inn Hall.

From "David Copperfield"

MR JINGLE

CHARLES DICKENS

HE was about the middle height, but the thinness of his body, and the length of his legs, gave him the appearance of being much taller. The green coat had been a smart dress garment in the days of swallow-tails, but had evidently in those times adorned a much shorter man than the stranger, for the soiled and faded sleeves scarcely reached to his wrists. It was buttoned closely up to his chin, at the imminent hazard of splitting the back; and an old stock, without a vestige of shirt collar, ornamented his neck. His scanty black trousers displayed here and there those shiny patches that bespeak long service, and were strapped very tightly over a pair of patched and mended shoes, as if to conceal the dirty white stockings, which were, nevertheless, distinctly visible. His long black hair escaped in negligent waves from beneath each side of his old pinched-up hat; and glimpses of his bare wrists might be observed between the tops of his gloves and the cuffs of his coat-sleeves. His face was thin and haggard; but an indescribable air of jaunty impudence and perfect self-possession pervaded the whole man.

Such was the individual on whom Mr Pickwick gazed through his spectacles (which he had fortunately recovered) and to whom he proceeded, when his friends had exhausted themselves, to return in chosen terms his warmest thanks for his recent assistance.

"Never mind," said the stranger, cutting the address very short, "said enough—no more; smart chap that cabman,—

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handled his fives well; but if I'd been your friend in the green jemmy—damn me—punch his head—'cod I would—pig's whisper—pieman too—no gammon."

This coherent speech was interrupted by the entrance of the Rochester coachman, to announce that the commodore was on the point of starting.

"Commodore!" said the stranger, starting up, "my coach—place booked—one outside—leave you to pay for the brandy-and-water—want change for a five—bad silver—Brummagem buttons—won't do—no go—eh?" and he shook his head most knowingly.

Now it so happened that Mr Pickwick and his three companions had resolved to make Rochester their first halting-place too; and, having intimated to their new-found acquaintance that they were journeying to the same city, they agreed to occupy the seat at the back of the coach, where they could all sit together.

"Up with you," said the stranger, assisting Mr Pickwick on to the roof with so much precipitation as to impair that gentleman's deportment very materially.

"Any luggage, sir?" inquired the coachman.

"Who—I? Brown paper parcel here, that's all—other luggage gone by water—packing-cases, nailed up—big as houses—heavy, heavy, damned heavy," replied the stranger, as he forced into his pocket as much as he could of the brown paper parcel, which presented most suspicious indications of containing one shirt and a handkerchief.

"Heads, heads,—take care of your heads!" cried the loquacious stranger, as they came out under the low archway, which in those days formed the entrance to the coach-yard.

"Terrible place—dangerous work—other day—five children—mother—tall lady, eating sandwiches—forgot the arch-crash—knock—children look round—mother's head off—sandwich in her hand—no mouth to put it in—head of a family off—shocking, shocking! Looking at Whitehall, sir?

MR JINGLE

—fine place—little window—somebody else's head off there, eh sir?—he didn't keep a sharp enough look-out either—eh, sir, eh?"

"I am ruminating," said Mr Pickwick, "on the strange mutability of human affairs."

"Ah! I see—in at the palace door one day, out at the window the next. Philosopher, sir?"

"An observer of human nature, sir," said Mr Pickwick.

"Ah, so am I. Most people are when they've little to do, and less to get. Poet, sir?"

"My friend, Mr Snodgrass, has a strong poetic turn," said Mr Pickwick.

"So have I," said the stranger. "Epic poem—ten thousand lines—revolution of July—composed it on the spot—Mars by day, Apollo by night—bang the field-piecee, twang the lyre."

"You were present at that glorious scene, sir?" said Mr Snodgrass.

"Present! I think I was; fired a musket—fired with an idea—rushed into wine-shop—wrote it down—back again—whiz, bang—another idea—wine-shop again—pen and ink—back again—cut and slash—noble time, sir. Sportsman, sir?" abruptly turning to Mr Winkle.

"A little, sir," replied that gentleman.

"Fine pursuit, sir—fine pursuit.—Dogs, sir?"

"Not just now," said Mr Winkle.

"Ah! you should keep dogs—fine animals—sagacious creatures—dog of my own once—pointer—surprising instinct—out shooting one day—entering enclosure—whistled—dog stopped—whistled again—Ponto—no go—stock still—called him—Ponto, Ponto—wouldn't move—dog transfixed—staring at a board—looked up, saw an inscription—'Gamekeeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in this enclosure'—wouldn't pass it—wonderful dog—valuable dog that—very."

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"Singular circumstance that," said Mr Pickwick. "Will you allow me to make a note of it?"

"Certainly, sir, certainly—hundred more anecdotes of the same animal.—Fine girl, sir" (to Mr Tracy Tupman, who had been bestowing sundry anti-Pickwickian glances on a young lady by the roadside).

"Very," said Mr Tupman.

"English girls not so fine as Spanish—noble creatures—jet hair—black eyes—lovely forms—sweet creatures—beautiful."

"You have been in Spain, sir?" said Mr Tracy Tupman.

"Lived there—ages."

"Many conquests, sir?" inquired Mr Tupman.

"Conquests! Thousands. Don Bolaro Fizzgig—grandee—only daughter—Donna Christina—splendid creature—loved me to distraction—jealous father—high-souled daughter—handsome Englishman—Donna Christina in despair—prussic acid—stomach pump in my portmanteau—operation performed—old Bolaro in ecstasies—consent to our union—join hands and floods of tears—romantic story—very."

"Is the lady in England now, sir?" inquired Mr Tupman, on whom the description of her charms had produced a powerful impression.

"Dead, sir—dead," said the stranger, applying to his right eye the brief remnant of a very old cambric handkerchief. "Never recovered the stomach pump—undermined constitution—fell a victim."

"And her father?" inquired the poetic Snodgrass.

"Remorse and misery," replied the stranger. "Sudden disappearance—talk of the whole city—search made everywhere without success—public fountain in the great square suddenly ceased playing—weeks elapsed—still a stoppage—workmen employed to clean it—water drawn off—father-in-law discovered sticking head first in the main pipe, with a full confession in his right boot—took him out and the fountain played away again as well as ever."

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"Will you allow me to note that little romance down, sir?" said Mr Snodgrass, deeply affected.

"Certainly, sir, certainly—fifty more if you like to hear 'em—strange life, mine—rather curious history—not extraordinary, but singular."

In this strain, with an occasional glass of ale, by way of parenthesis, when the coach changed horses, did the stranger proceed till they reached Rochester bridge, by which time the note-books both of Mr Pickwick and Mr Snodgrass were completely filled with selections from his adventures.

"Magnificent ruin!" said Mr Augustus Snodgrass, with all the poetical fervour that distinguished him, when they came in sight of the fine old castle.

"What a sight for an antiquarian!" were the very words that fell from Mr Pickwick's mouth, as he applied his telescope to his eye.

"Ah! fine place," said the stranger, "glorious pile—frowning walls—tottering arches—dark nooks—crumbling staircases—old cathedral too—earthy smell—pilgrim's feet wore away the old steps—little Saxon doors—confessionals like money-taker's boxes at the theatres—queer customers those old monks—popes and lord treasurers, and all sorts of old fellows with great red faces, and broken noses, turning up every day—buff jerkins too—matchlocks—sarcophagus—fine place—old legends too—strange stories: capital;" and the stranger continued to soliloquise until they reached the Bull Inn, in the High Street, where the coach stopped.

"Do you remain here, sir?" inquired Mr Nathaniel Winkle.

"Here—not I—but you'd better—good house—nice beds—Wright's next house, dear—very dear—half a crown in the bill if you look at the waiter—charge you more if you dine at a friend's than they would if you dined in the coffee-room—rum fellows—very."

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Mr Winkle turned to Mr Pickwick, and murmured a few words; a whisper passed from Mr Pickwick to Mr Snodgrass, from Mr Snodgrass to Mr Tupman, and nods of assent were exchanged. Mr Pickwick addressed the stranger.

"You rendered us a very important service this morning, sir," said he, "will you allow us to offer a slight mark of our gratitude by begging the favour of your company at dinner?"

"Great pleasure—not presume to dictate, but broiled fowl and mushrooms—capital thing! What time?"

"Let me see," replied Mr Pickwick, referring to his watch, "it is now nearly three. Shall we say five?"

"Suit me excellently," said the stranger, "five precisely—till then—care of yourselves"; and lifting the pinched-up hat a few inches from his head, and carelessly replacing it very much on one side, the stranger, with half the brown paper parcel sticking out of his pocket, walked briskly up the yard, and turned into the High Street.

"Evidently a traveller in many countries, and a close observer of men and things," said Mr Pickwick.

"I should like to see his poem," said Mr Snodgrass.

"I should have liked to have seen that dog," said Mr Winkle.

Mr Tupman said nothing; but he thought of Donna Christina, the stomach pump, and the fountain; and his eyes filled with tears.

From "Pickwick Papers"

TURVEYDROP'S ACADEMY

CHARLES DICKENS

WE went upstairs—it had been quite a fine house once, when it was anybody's business to keep it clean and fresh, and nobody's business to smoke in it all day—and into Mr Turveydrop's great room, which was built out into a mews

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at the back, and was lighted by a skylight. It was a bare resounding room, smelling of stables; with cane forms along the walls; and the walls ornamented at regular intervals with painted lyres, and little cut-glass branches for candles, which seemed to be shedding their old-fashioned drops as other branches might shed autumn leaves. Several young lady pupils, ranging from thirteen or fourteen years of age to two or three and twenty, were assembled; and I was looking among them for their instructor, when Caddy pinching my arm, repeated the ceremony of introduction. "Miss Summerson, Mr Prince Turveydrop."

I curtseyed to a little blue-eyed, fair-haired man, of youthful appearance, with flaxen hair parted in the middle, and curling at the ends all round his head. He had a little fiddle, which at school we used to call a kit, under his left arm, and its little bow in the same hand. His little dancing-shoes were particularly diminutive, and he had a little, innocent, feminine manner, which not only appealed to me in an amiable way, but made this singular effect on me; that I received the impression that he was like his mother, and that his mother had not been much considered or well used.

"I am very happy to see Miss Jellyby's friend," he said, bowing low to me. "I began to fear," with timid tenderness, "as it was past the usual time, that Miss Jellyby was not coming."

"I beg you will have the goodness to attribute that to me, who have detained her, and to receive my excuses, sir," said I.

"O dear!" said he.

"And pray," said I, "do not allow me to be the cause of any more delay."

With that apology I withdrew to a seat between Peepy (who, being well used to it, had already climbed into a corner place) and an old lady of a censorious countenance, whose two nieces were in the class, and who was very indignant with Peepy's boots. Prince Turveydrop then tinkled the

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strings of his kit with his fingers, and the young ladies stood up to dance. Just then there appeared from a side-door, old Mr Turveydrop, in the full lustre of his Deportment.

He was a fat old gentleman, with a false complexion, false teeth, false whiskers, and a wig. He had a fur collar, and he had a padded breast to his coat, which only wanted a star, or a broad blue ribbon to be complete. He was pinched in, and swelled out, and got up, and strapped down, as much as he could possibly bear. He had such a neckcloth on (puffing his very eyes out of their natural shape), and his chin and even his ears so sunk into it, that it seemed as though he must inevitably double up, if it were cast loose. He had, under his arm, a hat of great size and weight, shelving downward from the crown to the brim; and in his hand a pair of white gloves, with which he flapped it, as he stood poised on one leg, in a high-shouldered, round-elbowed state of elegance, not to be surpassed. He had a cane, he had an eye-glass, he had a snuff-box, he had rings, he had wrist bands, he had everything but any touch of nature; he was not like youth, he was not like age, he was not like anything in the world but a model of Deportment.

"Father! A visitor. Miss Jellyby's friend, Miss Summerson."

"Distinguished," said Mr Turveydrop, "by Miss Summerson's presence." As he bowed to me in that tight state I almost believe I saw creases come into the whites of his eyes.

"My father," said the son, aside, to me, with quite an affecting belief in him, "is a celebrated character. My father is greatly admired."

"Go on, Prince! Go on!" said Mr Turveydrop, standing with his back to the fire, and waving his gloves condescendingly. "Go on, my son!"

At this command, or by this gracious permission, the

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lesson went on. Prince Turveydrop sometimes played the kit, dancing; sometimes played the piano, standing; sometimes hummed the tune with what little breath he could spare, while he set a pupil right; always conscientiously moved with the least proficient through every step and every part of the figure; and never rested for an instant. His distinguished father did nothing but stand before the fire, a model of Deportment.

"And he never does anything else," said the old lady of the censorious countenance. "Yet would you believe that it's *his* name on the door-plate?"

"His son's name is the same, you know," said I.

"He wouldn't let his son have any name, if he could take it from him," returned the old lady. "Look at the son's dress!" It certainly was plain—threadbare—almost shabby. "Yet the father must be garnished and tricked out!" said the old lady, "because of his Deportment. I'd deport him! Transport him would be better!"

I felt curious to know more concerning this person. I asked, "Does he give lessons in Deportment, now?"

"Now!" returned the old lady, shortly. "Never did."

After a moment's consideration, I suggested that perhaps fencing had been his accomplishment?

"I don't believe he can fence at all, ma'am," said the old lady.

I looked surprised and inquisitive. The old lady, becoming more and more incensed against the Master of Deportment as she dwelt upon the subject, gave me some particulars of his career, with strong assurances that they were mildly stated.

He had married a meek little dancing-mistress with a tolerable connexion (having never in his life before done anything but deport himself), and had worked her to death, or had, at the best, suffered her to work herself to death, to maintain him in those expenses which were indispensable to

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his position. At once to exhibit his Deportment to the best models, and to keep the best models constantly before himself, he had found it necessary to frequent all places of fashionable and lounging resort; to be seen at Brighton and elsewhere at fashionable times; and to lead an idle life in the very best clothes. To enable him to do this, the affectionate little dancing-mistress had toiled and laboured, and would have toiled and laboured to that hour, if her strength had lasted so long. For the mainspring of the story was that, in spite of the man's absorbing selfishness, his wife (overpowered by his Deportment) had, to the last, believed in him, and had, on her death-bed, in the most moving terms, confided him to their son as one who had an inextinguishable claim on him, and whom he could never regard with too much pride and deference. The son, inheriting his mother's belief, and having the Deportment always before him, had lived and grown in the same faith, and now, at thirty years of age, worked for his father twelve hours a-day, and looked up to him with veneration on his old imaginary pinnacle.

"The airs that fellow gives himself!" said my informant, shaking her head at old Mr Turveydrop with speechless indignation as he drew on his tight gloves: of course unconscious of the homage she was rendering. "He fully believes he is one of the aristocracy! And he is so condescending to the son he so egregiously deludes, that you might suppose him the most virtuous of parents. O!" said the old lady, apostrophising him with infinite vehemence, "I could bite you!"

I could not help being amused, though I heard the old lady out with feelings of real concern. It was difficult to doubt her, with the father and son before me. What I might have thought of them without the old lady's account, or what I might have thought of the old lady's account without them, I cannot say. There was a fitness of things in the whole that carried conviction with it.

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My eyes were yet wandering from young Mr Turveydrop, working so hard, to old Mr Turveydrop deporting himself so beautifully, when the latter came ambling up to me and entered into conversation.

He asked me first of all whether I conferred a charm and distinction on London by residing in it? I did not think it necessary to reply that I was perfectly aware I should not do that, in any case, but merely told him where I did reside.

"A lady so graceful and accomplished," he said, kissing his right glove, and afterwards extending it towards the pupils, "will look leniently on the deficiencies here. We do our best to polish—polish—polish!"

He sat down beside me; taking some pains to sit on the form, I thought, in imitation of his illustrious model on the sofa. And really he did look very like it.

"To polish—polish—polish!" he repeated, taking a pinch of snuff and gently fluttering his fingers. "But we are not—if I may say so to one formed to be graceful both by Nature and Art"; with the high-shouldered bow, which it seemed impossible for him to make without lifting up his eye-brows and shutting his eyes—"we are not what we used to be in point of Deportment."

"Are we not, sir?" said I.

"We have degenerated," he returned, shaking his head, which he could do, to a very limited extent in his cravat. "A levelling age is not favourable to Deportment. It develops vulgarity. Perhaps I speak with some little partiality. It may not be for me to say that I have been called, for some years now, Gentleman Turveydrop; or that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent did me the honour to inquire, on my removing my hat as he drove out of the Pavilion at Brighton (that fine building), 'Who is he? Who the devil is he? Why don't I know him? Why hasn't he thirty thousand a year?' But these are little matters of anecdote—

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the general property, ma'am,—still repeated occasionally among the upper classes."

"Indeed?" said I.

He replied with the high-shouldered bow. "Where what is left to us of Deportment still lingers. England—alas, my country!—has degenerated very much, and is degenerating every day. She has not many gentlemen left. We are few. I see nothing to succeed us but a race of weavers."

"One might hope that the race of gentlemen would be perpetuated here," said I.

"You are very good," he smiled, with the high-shouldered bow again. "You flatter me. But no—no! I have never been able to imbue my poor boy with that part of his art. Heaven forbid that I should disparage my dear child, but he has—no Deportment."

"He appears to be an excellent master," I observed.

"Understand me, my dear madam, he *is* an excellent master. All that can be acquired, he has acquired. All that can be imparted, he can impart. But there *are* things"—he took another pinch of snuff, and made the bow again, as if to add, "this kind of thing, for instance."

I glanced towards the centre of the room where Miss Jellyby's lover, now engaged with single pupils, was undergoing greater drudgery than ever.

"My amiable child," murmured Mr Turveydrop, adjusting his cravat.

"Your son is indefatigable," said I.

"It is my reward," said Mr Turveydrop, "to hear you say so. In some respects he treads in the footsteps of his sainted mother. She was a devoted creature. But Wooman, lovely Wooman," said Mr Turveydrop, with very disagreeable gallantry, "what a sex you are!"

I rose and joined Miss Jellyby who was by this time putting on her bonnet. The time allotted to a lesson having fully elapsed, there was a general putting on of bonnets.

TURVEYDROP'S ACADEMY

When Miss Jellyby and the unfortunate Prince found an opportunity to become betrothed I don't know, but they certainly found none on this occasion, to exchange a dozen words.

"My dear," said Mr Turveydrop benignly to his son, "do you know the hour?"

"No, father." The son had no watch. The father had a handsome gold one, which he pulled out, with an air that was an example to mankind.

"My son," said he, "it's two o'clock. Recollect your school at Kensington at three."

"That's time enough for me, father," said Prince. "I can take a morsel of dinner, standing, and be off."

"My dear boy," returned his father, "you must be very quick. You will find the cold mutton on the table."

"Thank you, father. Are *you* off now, father?"

"Yes, my dear, I suppose," said Mr Turveydrop, shutting his eyes and lifting up his shoulders with modest consciousness, "that I must show myself, as usual, about town."

"You had better dine out comfortably, somewhere," said his son.

"My dear child, I intend to. I shall take my little meal, I think, at the French house in the Opera Colonnade."

"That's right. Good-bye, father!" said Prince, shaking hands.

"Good-bye, my son. Bless you!"

Mr Turveydrop said this in quite a pious manner, and it seemed to do his son good; who, in parting from him, was so pleased with him, so dutiful to him, and so proud of him, that I almost felt it was an unkindness to the younger man not to believe implicitly in the elder. The few moments that were occupied by Prince in taking leave of us (and particularly of one of us, as I saw, being in the secret), enhanced my favourable impression of his almost childish character. I felt a liking for him, and a compassion for him as he put his little

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kit in his pocket—and with it his desire to stay a little while with Caddy—and went away good-humouredly to his cold mutton and his school at Kensington, that made me scarcely less irate with his father than the censorious old lady.

The father opened the room-door for us, and bowed us out, in a manner, I must acknowledge, worthy of his shining original. In the same style he presently passed us on the other side of the street, on his way to the aristocratic part of the town, where he was going to show himself among the few other gentlemen left,

From "Bleak House"

NOTES AND EXERCISES

NORTHANGER ABBEY: JANE AUSTEN

1. Jane Austen's dates are 1775-1817. Look up the short biographical notice given in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or *Dictionary of National Biography*, and, if possible, read G. E. Mitton's *Jane Austen and her Times*.

2. *Northanger Abbey* was written in part to satirize the romances of Monk Lewis and Mrs Radcliffe. *The Castle of Otranto* was the forerunner of this school of fiction. Who wrote it? Write a short essay on "The Novel of Terror."

3. Jane Austen was a mistress of satire. How is this made clear in the passage quoted?

4. Write a character-sketch of General Tilney, basing it on the information given in this extract.

5. Describe Catherine's arrival at the abbey, and continue the adventure of the cedar chest in the manner of Mrs Radcliffe.

IMPROVEMENTS: JANE AUSTEN

1. Using this passage and the previous one for material, state what you think would have been Jane Austen's main requirements in an ideal country house.

2. Write a dialogue between Mrs Norris, General Tilney, and Mr Rushworth on the subject of furnishing a house and laying out its grounds.

3. The passion for 'improvements' lasted all through the eighteenth century and for most of the nineteenth. It first of all put Corinthian facades on mellow brick houses, and culminated in the stucco fronts of many London houses, and in the 'churchwarden's' restorations that have spoiled so many country churches. A notable example of bad restoration is the work of James Wyatt, friend of George III, at Salisbury Cathedral. Describe any church, old mansion, castle, or cathedral with which you are familiar. Find

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out how far it has been restored. Describe the original architecture, and say how far you think the restorations have been judicious.

4. Describe the main features of a typical (a) Elizabethan, (b) Queen Anne, (c) Georgian dwelling-house.

ULLATHORNE COURT: ANTHONY TROLLOPE

1. Anthony Trollope's dates are 1815-82. Look up the short biographies, and, if you can, read Michael Sadleir's book about him.

2. *Barchester Towers* was written in 1857. Describe appropriate dresses for Mr and Miss Thorne at that period, and what their amusements were likely to be. (Old prints and early copies of *Punch* will help you.)

3. Much of the charm of Ullathorne depended on its garden. When did gardens first become of great interest in England? What do you think are the essential characteristics of an English garden?

4. Describe (a) a Dutch garden, (b) an Italian garden. At what time was each of these extremely fashionable in England?

5. Describe any beautiful and celebrated garden that you may have visited.

OUR VILLAGE: M. R. MITFORD

ANOTHER KIND OF VILLAGE—1837: BENJAMIN DISRAELI

1. Look up dates and short biographies of Mary Russell Mitford and Lord Beaconsfield (Disraeli).

2. "Rebellious innovation of an illumination on the Queen's acquittal." Comment on this. What parties supported Queen Caroline, and why?

3. Write a carefully accurate description of any road or village street that you know well.

4. Disraeli ascribes a good deal of the misery in agricultural districts to the fact that the landlords failed to build cottages for the workers. What other main factors contributed to their distress in the ten years after Waterloo?

5. What was the 'Speenhamland Act'? How did it affect the workers on the land?

6. Trace the history of the Poor Law from the great Act of

NOTES AND EXERCISES

Elizabeth to the Poor Law Amendment Bill of 1834. What were the first effects of the latter?

7. Many diseases (notably cholera, typhus, and ague) were very prevalent in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and had been practically stamped out by its close. How was this achieved?

A GREAT FARMHOUSE: M. R. MITFORD

1. Early in the nineteenth century there were many 'great farmhouses' scattered over the face of England. By its close the few that existed were but survivals of an earlier day. To what main causes do you attribute this change?

2. Hazlitt, in one of his essays, says, "Few subjects are more nearly allied than these two—vulgarity and affectation," and "gentility is only a more select and artificial kind of vulgarity." Comment on these statements. Do you think Miss Mitford agreed with Hazlitt?

3. Write down as many old English flower-names as you can that appeal to you as especially quaint or appropriate.

4. Quote two passages from Shakespeare in which the names of flowers are used with beautiful effect.

5. Notice that before the days of photography it was usual for people, even of modest means, to employ artists to paint their portraits, or even, as in this case, those of their domestic pets. Name an early nineteenth-century painter with whose work you are familiar, and describe one of his pictures.

A YEOMAN FARMER: E. C. GASKELL

1. Write a brief account of Mrs Gaskell's life and works, noting what very different topics she treated in her books.

2. Compare the extract given with the preceding ones from Miss Mitford's *Our Village*. What qualities have the two authors in common, and how do they differ?

3. "More black than ash-buds in the front of March" and "A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade" are both quotations from Tennyson's *The Gardener's Daughter*. Read the poem through,

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and note any other passages in it which seem to you to be of great beauty, or to show keen observation.

4. Select ten other lines from English poetry that show vivid appreciation of natural facts.

THE HALL FARM: GEORGE ELIOT

1. Read and make notes on the biographical account of George Eliot given in the reference books already mentioned.

2. Compare the account of farm-life given here with the two preceding extracts. Which do you think the most vivid and convincing, and why?

3. Mrs Poyser is one of George Eliot's most famous creations. Read *Adam Bede* if possible, or at least those parts in which Mrs Poyser appears.

4. Describe the ladies who visited the Yeoman Farmer as they would appear to Mrs Poyser, and in her words.

MR COLLINS: JANE AUSTEN

1. Notice how Jane Austen makes Mr Collins condemn himself out of his own mouth. What are his chief characteristics?

2. What do you gather about the characters of Mr Bennet, Mrs Bennet, and Elizabeth? How do you get your impression of them?

THE MARCH OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS CHARLOTTE BRONTË

1. From the information you can glean from this passage and from that describing the Stilbro' Moor riot write a character-sketch of Mr Helstone.

2. Read the account of "the Curates" in the first chapter of *Shirley*. What circumstances in Charlotte Brontë's life influenced her views on the clergy?

3. What estimates do you form of the characters of (1) Mr Hall, (2) Shirley Keeldar, (3) Caroline Helstone, from the information given in this short extract? On what do you base your conclusions?

NOTES AND EXERCISES

4. What great reforming and energizing movements awoke the Church of England from the lethargy into which it had sunk in the earlier years of the nineteenth century?
5. Give some account of the work of Robert Raikes and of the spread and influence on general education of the Sunday School movement.

TWO RECTORIES: ANTHONY TROLLOPE

1. What good and bad points in Mr Crawley's character are made evident in the description of Hogglestock Parsonage? Do you think Trollope admires him?

2. Notice that all the clergy described by Trollope, even the poverty-stricken Mr Crawley, are men of learning and desirous of doing their duty, although they sometimes conceive it mistakenly. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Jane Austen describes the typical clergyman as rather an inferior kind of squire, than as having any special spiritual significance. Turn to Thackeray's *Henry Esmond* and you will see how they were regarded in early Georgian times. Trace the history of the revival in the Church of England in the nineteenth century.

3. It has been said that the sons or daughters of the rectory or the manse have included in their numbers an unusually large proportion of famous men and women. Can you find out, and name, ten of them?

SHEPPERTON FOLK DISCUSS THEIR CURATE GEORGE ELIOT

1. This extract also throws light on the inequalities in fortune and social status existing among the clergy. Have any attempts been made in the last century to deal with, and mitigate, this situation?

2. What examples does this passage contain of George Eliot's wit and understanding of the Midland peasant?

3. Which of the "aunts" in *The Mill on the Floss* do Mrs Patten and Mrs Hackit remind you of respectively?

4. Comment on "bohea," "side-dishes," "clogs," and "lacteal addition."

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A RECEPTION AT PARCHMSTER PALACE AUSTEN TROLLOPE

1. "We have not been so hard on you at Oxford." The Bishop is depicted as having been a member of the commission which was appointed to inquire into the condition of the University in 1850, and whose recommendations were embodied in the Oxford University Act of 1854. Explain the necessity for the holding of such a commission, and what its principal results were.

2. What other commissions on universities and schools were held in the nineteenth century, and what did they accomplish?

3. Why were "German professors" so unpopular with the Oxford dons? What author, depicted by Trollope, was supposed to be their mouth-piece?

4. Imagine the farcical scene when Bettie Stanhope knelt at Mrs Proudie's feet. Describe, as through speaking of an actual painting, the grouping and dress of the characters. (*Pant* will again be useful.)

A BARCHESTER ELECTION: AUSTEN TROLLOPE

1. Study Hogarth's 'Election' pictures. Write a detailed description of them.

2. What features of them are you reminded of in the Barchester election? Do you see much advance in the customs of the mid-nineteenth over those of the eighteenth century?

3. Compare Trollope's account of Barchester with Dickens' Eatanswill in *Pickwick*. Which account do you consider (a) the more truthful, (b) the more vivid?

4. How is a modern General Election carried out?

THE 'BEDCHAMBER' INCIDENT: BENJAMIN DISRAELI

1. Give an account of the 'Bedchamber Plot.' In what ways was it constitutionally important?

2. Do you consider Peel was justified in taking the action he did?

3. Show how the Tory democracy of Disraeli, outlined in *Sybil* and *Coningsby*, revolutionized the Conservative Party.

NOTES AND EXERCISES

- What later actions of Disraeli were in sympathy with the attitude to the Crown disclosed in this passage?

MACHINE-BREAKING AT STILBRO': CHARLOTTE BRONTE

1. Read as much as you can about Charlotte Bronte and her sisters. Mrs Gaskell's *Life* is very interesting, and in many ways an admirable study.

2. Give an account of the machine-breaking and Luddite riots at the beginning of the nineteenth century. What caused them, and how was their ultimate cessation brought about?

3. Which do you think was the more nearly right about Napoleon, Helstone or Moore, and why?

4. Give a brief account of Wellington's campaign in the Peninsula, and show its importance to world-history.

5. Show how the Berlin Decrees, and the answering Orders in Council combined to ruin trade. Why did England recover more quickly than the Continent?

A CORN RIOT: CHARLES KINGSLEY

1. What were the causes of these riots? When did the most serious of them take place? Compare the extract from *Sybil* headed "Another Kind of Village."

2. Compare the corn riot described here with the one in Mrs Craik's *John Halifax, Gentleman*.

3. Give an account of the successive steps toward lowering the corn duties, culminating in the Act of Sir Robert Peel.

4. Show how the resistance to any reform of the Corn Laws was at its strongest before the Reform Bill of 1832, and bound to collapse when that had become law.

A MINING DISTRICT IN EARLY VICTORIAN DAYS: BENJAMIN DISRAELI

1. Show how the combined effect of the Industrial Revolution and the Napoleonic wars was to "make the country richer, and the majority of its people poorer."

NOTES AND EXERCISES

3. Write a brief account of Robert Owen and his work. How far do you consider his schemes practicable?

4. How far do you think the schemes of English reformers were in sympathy with those that Louis Blanc tried to put into operation after the "July Revolution"?

A YOUNG LADY LEAVES SCHOOL

W. M. THACKERAY

1. This extract is from the first chapter of *Vanity Fair*. What do you know of the characters and plot of that novel?

2. Can you give an approximate date for the events described? Who was Mrs Chaperone? Name three other learned ladies of her time.

3. How would the "young ladies" of the academy be dressed? Make a sketch of Miss Sedley and Miss Sharp coming out of the "filigree iron gates," with Miss Pinkerton watching from the background.

4. Thackeray and Dickens are the outstanding authors of their period. Compare and contrast them.

MONTEM: BENJAMIN DISRAELI

This strange ceremony was abolished in 1847. As more than £1000 was often collected in 'salt,' and a large proportion of it became the property of the captain of the school, it was considered a custom liable to grave abuse.

1. Give some account of Eton College, and its part in the national life. What other schools claim a like antiquity?

2. There are many references to Eton in English poetry. Find and quote some of them.

3. The great Eton festival is the Fourth of June procession of boats. Describe this or any other interesting school or college ceremonial with which you may be familiar.

4. "There is a wild splendour, a distorted magnificence, an unattractive beauty, about Disraeli's social scene." Is there anything in the passage quoted to justify this sentence of Mr Guedalla?

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A COUNTRY NIGHT-SCHOOL: GEORGE ELIOT

1. Little interest in the education of any but the 'upper' classes was taken before the nineteenth century. Describe the work of Hannah More. What were her ideas of a fitting education for the poor?
2. Indicate briefly the successive steps by which free elementary education was brought about. Emphasize the work of the two great societies.
3. Note the humour, the pathos, and the vividness of this passage. What would you select as the main characteristics of George Eliot's style?
4. Compare Bartle Massey with Goldsmith's clergyman in *The Deserted Village*.

LOWOOD SCHOOL: CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Lowood is the name under which Charlotte Brontë describes the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge, to which she and her sisters were sent. Two sisters died, and Charlotte Brontë attributed their early deaths to the poor food and unhealthy surroundings of the school. How far she was right it is difficult to determine, but the school was shortly afterward reformed and reorganized, and was removed to a healthier situation.

1. Compare a day at Lowood with a day passed at your own school.
2. Charlotte Brontë has been spoken of as having "the ambition, the daydream, the self-consciousness, and the anger of the women born to obscurity." Is there any justification for this saying, either in this extract or in any other of her works that you know well?
3. Read through the extracts given from George Eliot, Mrs Gaskell, and Charlotte Brontë, and say what you think are the chief differences in their styles.

A STRAWBERRY PARTY: JANE AUSTEN

1. Alice Meynell says of Jane Austen that "she is mistress of derision rather than of wit or humour." Do you consider this a just saying?

NOTES AND EXERCISES

2. Write character-sketches of Mrs Elton and Mr Knightley, drawing solely on the material supplied in this passage.
3. Note the passage on strawberry-picking, "The best fruit in England . . . must go and sit in the shade." Write a description in the same manner on any topic you prefer—e.g., visiting the Academy (or any museum), rowing a party of friends on a hot day, a dance that lasts too long, or any other amusement that begins well, but drags before the end.

AN EVENING PARTY AT CRANFORD E. C. GASKELL

1. Why do you think *Cranford* was, and has remained, the most popular of all Mrs Gaskell's books?
2. Compare the gentle fun of Mrs Gaskell with the sharp satire of Miss Austen. Describe Miss Matty and Miss Jenkyns as Jane Austen would have seen them.
3. If you have read *Emma*, what character do you think resembles Miss Matty, and how does she differ from her?
4. Say what you know of *Rasselas*. Read a passage giving a conversation between Imlac and Rasselas. Why do you think Dr Johnson was Miss Jenkyns' favourite author?
5. Write a brief note on *The Rambler*. What other well-known periodicals of a similar type appeared in the eighteenth century?

THE BATH ASSEMBLY-ROOMS: JANE AUSTEN

1. Study any prints or pictures of Bath that you can obtain, and, either from them, or from personal knowledge, write a description of the town.
2. Show what an important part Bath played in the social life of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
3. Write a short note on Beau Nash.
4. Name six books, either classic or modern, the scenes in which are laid at Bath.
5. Describe the ball at the rooms from your own instead of Catherine's point of view. Note the costume of the dancers and any differences in ballroom etiquette, then and now.

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THE WARDEN'S TEA-PARTY: ANTHONY TROLLOPE

1. Read through the description of the game of whist in this passage. Compare it with Charles Lamb's *Mrs Battle*.
2. Read the whole passage through, and then write an account of the party, putting in all the detail that you can remember, but in your own words. Compare your description with Trollope's.
3. Read again all the extracts from Trollope that are given in this book, and then say what you think are his peculiar excellences and faults as a writer.

A MANCHESTER TEA-PARTY: E. C. GASKELL

1. Compare the two tea-parties. Notice that in the first the actual food provided is hardly mentioned. Why is so much stress laid upon it in the second case?
2. The room in which the Bartons had their party is so carefully described that it is as full of clear detail as a Dutch picture. Try to describe any room you know well, so that it comes as distinctly before the reader.
3. Make imaginary portraits for yourself of the Warden, the Archdeacon, Mary Barton, and Alice, and either sketch them or paint them in words.

FOX-HUNTING: CHARLES KINGSLEY

1. Charles Kingsley is perhaps chiefly remembered for his historical novels, such as *Westward Ho!* and *Hereward the Wake*, but he was keenly interested in the social and religious problems of the time, and wrote of them in *Alton Locke* and *Yeast*. Read what you can about him, and give a brief account of his principal books.
2. Write notes on (a) "antigropelous," (b) "penny-steamer," (c) "Manfred," (d) "Thorough bush, thorough briar . . ."
3. Hunting of various sorts has always been one of the chief pastimes of Englishmen. Quote three songs in praise of hunting.
4. Read John Davidson's fine poem *A Runnable Stag*. Note the last verse. Would it have ended like that if it had been written half a century earlier?

NOTES AND EXERCISES

BRIGHTON: W. M. THACKERAY

1. Why is George IV said to have invented Brighton? What part of London did he also 'invent' as a fashionable quarter?
2. Show from your reading how the taste in fashionable resorts shifted from inland 'cures,' such as Bath and Tunbridge Wells, situated in placid, smiling country, and moved to the sea and the mountains which the eighteenth century had found so 'horrid.'
3. What differences in the types frequenting the promenade and their amusements are to be found between Thackeray's day and our own?
4. Describe in Thackeray's manner the promenade of any seaside resort that you have visited.
5. Do you admire Miss Honeyman? Do you see her entirely with Thackeray's eyes?

TODGERS'S: CHARLES DICKENS

1. Dickens is sometimes looked upon as a master of caricature, sometimes as the founder of the 'realistic' novel. What particulars are there in this passage to confirm either, or both, views?
2. This is only one of many amusing meals described by Dickens. Give an account of any other in detail.
3. Apart from the oddities of the guests, do you detect any differences in the food and the manner of serving, as compared with what might be expected in a boarding-house to-day?

BY COACH TO RUGBY: THOMAS HUGHES

1. In the novels of the period there are constant references to road traffic. Suppose yourself to be travelling from London to St Albans in 1820; what types of vehicles would you be likely to meet on the way?
2. Jusserand in his book on *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* shows what an important part highways played in the life of a people. Read Chapter II, on "The Ordinary Traveller." What changes would such a one have noticed if he had found himself on the road in 1850?

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3. Describe as accurately as you can (*a*) a stagecoach, (*b*) a gentleman's travelling carriage, (*c*) a phaeton, (*d*) a tilbury, (*e*) a brougham, (*f*) a hansom-cab.

4. "The Doctor, a terrible stern man he'd heard tell"—this refers to Dr Arnold. Give an account of his work at Rugby, and its effect on the other public schools.

INNS AND POSTING: CHARLES DICKENS

1. The passage chosen shows how uncomfortable coaching could sometimes be, but Dickens has also described many delightful and amusing journeys—*e.g.*, Tom Pinch's journey from Salisbury, and some of the travels of the Pickwick Club. Give an account of one such trip.

2. Write an original story of a journey by coach, and of either a horrible or amusing adventure at an inn.

3. Dickens mentions the strange ideas and superstitions that sometimes survive in country places. Tell any such story, belief, or superstition that you may have heard of in your own locality.

4. Some of the posting inns, such as those described by Dickens, are still preserved. Give an account—if possible, illustrated—of any one which you may have visited. By what signs would you recognize such an inn?

EFFECTS OF THE RAILWAYS ON A COUNTRY TOWN: ANTHONY TROLLOPE

1. Give a clear and detailed account of the development of railway enterprise during the nineteenth century.

2. The passage given shows the effect of the opening of a railway on the prosperity of a small country town. What was there to be said on the other side of the question?

3. Write an essay on modern traffic problems. Do you think it possible that the highroads may once more triumph over the railways?

4. Give some account of the mania for railway speculation during the middle years of the century.

NOTES AND EXERCISES

5. Before railways became all-triumphant something had been done to cope with increased industrial traffic by improving the highways and constructing canals. Give an account of what was accomplished.

A PAIR OF 'ORIGINALS': SIR WALTER SCOTT

1. Enumerate Scott's principal novels, stating in each case what period each deals with. Which of them are written about his own time?
2. Scott has created many queer and original characters. Give details of three with whom you are acquainted.
3. Give an account of the campaign in Syria in which Mr Cargill had been involved. Who was Djezzar Pacha?
4. Explain the reference to Boswell's taking Dr Johnson to dine with Strachan and John Wilkes. Why was it a 'triumph'?

THE INNS OF COURT

W. M. THACKERAY and CHARLES DICKENS

1. Name the principal Inns of Court, and give a brief account of their history.
2. Describe a visit to the Inns, either from actual experience, or, if you have not visited them, use a good guide-book.
3. Give an account of the Temple Church.
4. What characteristic differences are there between the people with whom Dickens and Thackeray respectively people the Inns? Which are the more realistic? Which are the more real and living?
5. Write a character-sketch of Traddles.
6. Describe the Crewler family at home, as they would appear to an unprejudiced observer.

MR JINGLE: CHARLES DICKENS

1. Rewrite any well-known fairy-tale—e.g., *Puss in Boots*—and, secondly, any stirring ballad, in 'Jingle-ese.'

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2. Rewrite and expand Mr Jingle's description of Rochester Cathedral in normal English.
3. How does Mr Jingle adapt his stories to each of his listeners? What light is thrown on their character?
4. Write a new and original adventure for Mr Jingle.

TURVEYDROP'S ACADEMY: CHARLES DICKENS

1. Read Thackeray's essay on George IV in *The Four Georges*.
2. Study any portraits of George IV that you can find, then compare them, feature for feature, with Dickens's Mr Turveydrop.
3. Notice the great cleverness with which Dickens uses exaggeration to heighten the vividness of his portraits—"puffing his very eyes out of their natural shape," etc. Study any portrait, man or woman, and try to write from it what shall be at once a pen-picture and an analysis of character.
4. Look up the chapters of *David Copperfield* in which Miss Betsey Trotwood appears, and write an imaginary conversation between her and Mr Turveydrop on the subject of his treatment of Prince.